

FROM THE EDITORS OF OFFICIAL  XBOX MAGAZINE

XBOX LIVE GAMER

Vol. 1

XBOX LIVE ONLINE ENABLED

HALO 2

9 PAGES OF MULTIPLAYER ONLINE DETAILS, TIPS, AND INSIGHT YOU CAN'T GET ANYWHERE ELSE

YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO GAMING ONLINE!

UNLEASH ALL OF XBOX LIVE'S OPTIONS!

- Find fans of your favorite games – FAST!
- Find free and premium downloads
- How to play on Live with celebrities
- Improve your game with our Advanced Tips!

30+ ONLINE GAMES PREVIEWED!



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Editor's Letter

Welcome to Xbox Live!

As an old-school online gamer from the days before Xbox was even a twinkle in the Microsoft corporate eye, I can tell you that the evolution of Xbox Live as a unique online entertainment platform has been the realization of many high-concept gaming hopes and dreams. Seriously, not five years ago, PC gamers were dominating the online space with competing services eking out their existence by trying to convince players that paying for membership to a community was okay. Offering matchmaking services, web-page hosting, message systems, and lag-free gaming was at the heart of all these options.

But it wasn't until Xbox Live launched that the vision became a sustainable reality. Aside from bringing Xbox online with smooth games and core functions that make finding games easy, Xbox Live planted its flag in the sand to say "Here, this is what gamers want - we know because we asked them - and this is what we'll continue to deliver."

Introducing such gamer-friendly functions as downloadable content - new goodies (often free of charge) that add more value to existing games - has established Xbox Live as the ideal service for any Xbox gamer. Enough so that we thought you'd appreciate a complete primer on what the Xbox Live service has to offer, along with previews of all the most important Live-enabled games heading your way in 2005.

If you're new to Xbox Live, be sure to check out our Top Five Must-Do Tips for beginning your life on Live, and as you become comfortable with the service, be sure to take advantage of the advanced tips that ensure you never miss any of the big news.

Of course, Live is all about the games, and we've collected the latest information on all the biggest games that will dominate your Live time in the coming year.

Enjoy!

Rob



XBOX

Official Xbox Magazine

Xbox Live Gamer 2004

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Xbox Live Gamer 2004

Contents

THE DISC

- 04 WELCOME TO THE ARCADE!**
A complete, free version of Xbox Live Arcade's *Ms. Pac-Man* awaits you on the disc that comes with this magazine.

THE BASICS

- 06 FACTS AND FIGURES**
The history and numbers of Xbox Live.
- 08 UP AND RUNNING**
All you need to know to get started on Live.

THE GAMES

- 18 HALO 2**
- 32 TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY**
- 46 DELTA FORCE: BLACK HAWK DOWN**
- 56 MECHASULT 2: LONE WOLF**
- 60 CLANCY'S CLASSICS**
- 66 UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP 2: THE LIANDRI CONFLICT**
- 70 NINJA GAIDEN**
- 72 XBOX LIVE SPORTS**
- 78 CONKER: LIVE AND RELOADED**
- 84 FULL SPECTRUM WARRIOR**
- 88 LIVE RACING GAMES**
- 98 DOOM 3**
- 106 UPCOMING LIVE GAMES**
There's a lot more on the way to Live, including *Pariah*, *Brothers in Arms*, and *Star Wars Republic Commando*.

THE DOWNLOADS

- 36 THE FREEBIES**
A treasure trove of extra gameplay at no extra cost.
- 40 PREMIUM CONTENT**
Goodies so amazing that five bucks is a steal.

THE XBOX LIVE ARCADE

- 28 THE SERVICE**
What you get and how it works.
- 31 THE GAMES**
Bite-sized reviews for byte-sized classics.

HOW-TO TIPS & ADVICE

- 50 PRIME TIME**
Check out what kind special events take place on Xbox Live and when.
- 86 LAN PARTIES**
To go face to face with your buddies, here's what you need to bring.
- 92 XBOX LIVE HARDWARE**
Wireless networking goodies and other great gadgets.
- 102 BE AN EXPERT USER**
Once you're feeling comfortable on Xbox Live, these advanced tips can up the enjoyment even more.

THE FUTURE & THE FUNNIES

- 82 SHANE KIM INTERVIEW**
The head of Microsoft Game Studios gives us the scoop on the future of Xbox Live.
- 112 XBOX LIVE GAMER'S FIELD GUIDE**
A tongue-in-cheek peek at the types of folks you'll meet on Xbox Live.

GAMES OF LIVE



HALO 2 Pg. 18

If you're reading this magazine, you probably either own or plan to buy this masterpiece.

GAMES OF 2005



TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL CHAOS THEORY Pg. 32

THE DOWNLOADS



PREMIUM CONTENT Pg. 40



PLATINUM HITS

The hits just keep on coming



...and coming



all for only \$19.99*

We've added nine best-selling titles to the already growing list of Platinum Hits. With over 50 titles to choose from, you'll find something to fulfill every gaming genre from Sports and Action to RPGs and Driving and everything in between. Hits like Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic, Tony Hawk's Underground, and True Crime: Streets of L.A. Check out the complete list at xbox.com/platinumhits

Platinum Hits: 55 of the best-selling Xbox games and counting.



it's good to play together

Welcome to the Arcade!

Congratulations! You're about to enter the retro, classic-crammed, downright fun-for-everyone place known as the Xbox Live Arcade! On the disc included with this magazine you'll find the one-stop shop you need to get started. Try your hand at the classic *Ms. Pac-Man*, then browse and download new titles in a wealth of different genres. Getting into the fun is easy! Here's what you'll see:

Step 1:

INSERT THE XBOX LIVE ARCADE GAME DISC.

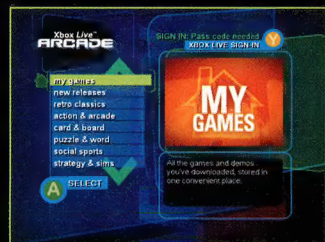


Step 2:

You'll be brought to the main menu. Here you can see a list of game categories, including:

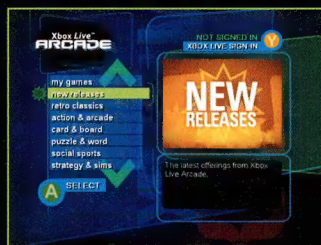
MY GAMES

Consider this your home base – everything can be done from here. Any full title or demo version you've downloaded from Xbox Live will be listed in this menu. When you first pop in the disc included with this magazine, you'll see *Ms. Pac-Man*.



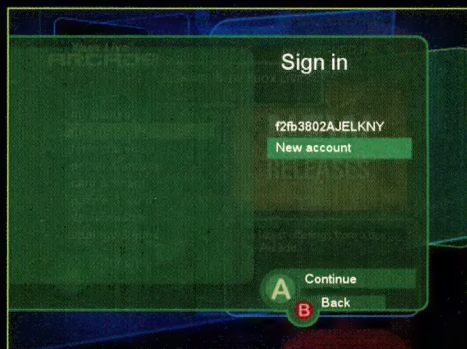
NEW RELEASES

Not if but rather when you get hooked on the games of Arcade, here's where you'll go to download all of the latest releases.



Step 3:

Sign in to Xbox Live by pressing the Y button. This will allow you to browse through all of the other offerings in the Xbox Live Arcade.



Step 4:

It's time to play! Highlight the My Games menu bar and press the A button.



Step 7:

Game on!



Step 5:

Press the A button to launch *Ms. Pac-Man!*



Step 8:

When you're finished playing and would like to return to the main menu, press the Start button and select Quit Game.



Step 6:

Configure your game. Press the A button to begin a one-player game, the X button for a two-player contest, or the Start button to toggle your preferences, including game options, screen size, and game tips.



Xbox Live Facts and Figures

What are Xbox Live's most played games? How many gamers have tried played on Xbox Live? Who doesn't love trivia? Here's every fact and figure you could want – so impress your friends with your Xbox Live insider knowledge.

As of July 2004, the Xbox Live community has already grown to more than one million members, a milestone that was achieved three times faster than other subscriber-based entertainment services such as HBO, AOL, and TiVo.



How Often Are People Playing? (as of 08/30/04)

TO DATE:

- Players have logged more than 220,536,655 online sessions
- Players have spent more than 160,006,293 hours online

MONTHLY:

- Players are playing an average of 10,503,971 game sessions
- Players are logging an average of 7,621,091 hours

WEEKLY:

- Players are playing an average of 2,535,441 game sessions
- Players are logging an average of 1,839,573 hours

DAILY:

- Players are playing an average of 366,127 game sessions
- Players are logging an average of 265,549 hours

Top Ten Xbox Live-Enabled Titles By Unit Sales



■ Ghost Recon is sitting pretty in the top slot.

1. **Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon** from Ubisoft
2. **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3** from Ubisoft
3. **MechAssault** from Microsoft Game Studios
4. **Ninja Gaiden** from Tecmo
5. **Unreal Championship** from Atari
6. **Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow** from Ubisoft
7. **Project Gotham Racing 2** from Microsoft Game Studios
8. **NFL Fever 2003** from Microsoft Game Studios
9. **Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Island Thunder** from Ubisoft
10. **Counter-Strike** from Microsoft Game Studios

Most Popular Xbox Live Games by Hours Played on the Xbox Live Service

1. **Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3** from Ubisoft
2. **Counter-Strike** from Microsoft Game Studios
3. **Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon** from Ubisoft
4. **Project Gotham Racing 2** from Microsoft Game Studios
5. **MechAssault** from Microsoft Game Studios
6. **Phantasy Star Online** from Sega
7. **Return to Castle Wolfenstein** from Activision
8. **Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon Island Thunder** from Ubisoft
9. **Unreal Championship** from Atari



■ **Rainbow Six 3** delivers the online goods, according to Xbox Live players.

Number of Countries with Xbox Live: 24

30% of Xbox Live subscribers have an estimated income of \$75,000 or more

Number of Xbox Live-enabled games available by Holiday 2005: 150

(ALL DATA PROVIDED BY MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS)



■ **MechAssault 2** and online gameplay go hand in hand.

Up & Running

Every saga has a beginning...

If you've just joined the million-plus gamers on Xbox Live...welcome! You're among friends. Xbox Live is a complete entertainment experience, and we're here to guide you through its many activities and events, and ensure that you're up and running in no time, getting into the action, making friends, and discovering for yourself the great gaming opportunities.



TECH STUFF

Setting up and signing in to Xbox Live is embarrassingly simple. Here's all you'll need:

- >>> An Xbox. In case you forgot, it's that black and green box that you dream about every night.
- >>> A high-speed Internet connection. DSL, cable, T1 – whatever your flavor of broadband access, you can put it to much better use with your Xbox. (In other words, if you're still using dial-up access, you have to upgrade to a faster, more robust connection before you can use Live.) If you have a router hooked up, that's no problem – as long as it's working okay with your other devices, all you'll need is an open jack for your Xbox.
- >>> An Ethernet cable. This is a standard computer cable that looks like an oversized telephone cord. You'll find them in every computer and software store in the world, not to mention mass-market retailers like Target, Wal-Mart, and Best Buy. Sometimes they're called "Cat-5" cables – that's okay, that's the nerdy term for exactly what you want, so don't be baffled by it.

Now you've got the three crucial elements. It's time to put them together. You must follow these detailed instructions exactly.

Step 1: Plug one end of the Ethernet cable into your cable/DSL modem (for a spare port on your router, if you have a fancy home network going), and the other into your Xbox.

Step 2: Make sure you did that right.

Congratulations! You did it! Get a cookie! Better still, turn on that Xbox and get yourself online – online gaming against human opponents is like a cookie you can share with the world. Tasty.



Real Live Gamers: Tweenkel Toesie

Amee is a college student from Redding, California, but in the Xbox Live community, she's known as "Tweenkel Toesie." Her game tastes cover a wide range with favorites such as *RollerCoaster Tycoon* and *Tetris Worlds*, but she's far from being a demure "gamer girl" as she also enjoys battling it out in *Counter-Strike*, *Halo 2*, and *MechAssault*.

She got into online gaming on the Xbox after visiting a friend with a Xbox and playing multiplayer games at his house. After his

purchase of a router for a home network, she bought one of the special-edition Halo/Xbox bundles as well as a copy of the Xbox Live Starter Kit, and she's been hooked on the varied competition and camaraderie ever since.

"I like Xbox Live because I enjoy talking to people while I'm playing a game," Amee says. "I especially like to play *Tetris Worlds* before I go to bed – it relaxes me and you can be more social than other games. It's easy to talk and move the pieces around at the same time."

While Amee hasn't had the chance to meet anyone from her Friends List face to face, she's certainly made lasting connections with some players, and she trades text messages via her mobile phone with some of them. Of course, in Xbox Live, she keeps in touch with a regular group of players who "every time we're on, we'll play. They're not just people you put on your Friends List and never play again, but people we enjoy playing with."

Gamertag – You're It

Signing up from here is a simple matter of entering your information. There's one crucial bit of info that only you can decide: What will your Gamertag be?

Your Gamertag is the online name that will identify you in every single Xbox Live game. Your Gamertag is permanent and unchangeable, so it's important to choose a Gamertag that suits you best. And since you're stuck with it, it's worth putting some effort into what you want it to be.

Obviously, there are some things you won't be able to do. Vulgar, racist, or offensive names are going to be squashed in short order (and hey, that's not what multiplayer gaming is about anyway). But beyond that, the choice is yours.

With over a million subscribers, you might think all the good names are already taken, but that's not true. The best Gamertags are the ones with personal significance. If you have a nickname in the real world, make it your Gamertag. If

When you sign up, keep in mind that capitalization counts. If you want to be "XboxLiveAddict," that's fine – just remember to use capital letters where they're appropriate or you'll be "xBoxLiveADdict." And this goes without saying, but spelling counts too.

If you're really stumped and can't come up with a name, Xbox Live will offer you some suggestions. It's just a random name generator, but it might give you some good ideas, even if it

doesn't have a name that you would choose for all time.

Once again – we can't stress this enough – you've got to get this all right the first time because there is no way to change your Gamertag once you choose it. Your only recourse is to cancel the account when your subscription comes due and start a brand-new one. That sucks. Don't let it happen to you.

Subscription Update

Remember, if you have another card with a subscription code, it's easy to keep your account active and you'll never miss a moment of the action. The alternative? Lose your Gamertag.

Through your Account Management page on your Xbox dashboard (just power on your console without a game in it and follow the menus in the Xbox Live section), you can modify your subscription by just plugging in the new subscription number. Follow the simple instruction onscreen, and you'll be good for more months of great gaming.

Remember, so long as your details are up to date, your monthly or annual subscription will automatically renew so the great action, the great community, and all the features you love from Xbox Live just keep on coming...



someone else already has the name, tack on the abbreviation of the state where you live, or maybe your zip code. This is an instant conversation starter because someone else from your state will ask exactly where you live, and suddenly, you'll find yourself with another name on your friends list.

Another method is – gasp! – to crack open a book. Think of a word that you think describes your personality, then find a synonym in a thesaurus. You'll find some interesting, rarely used words that could be perfect for how you want to be perceived by other gamers.

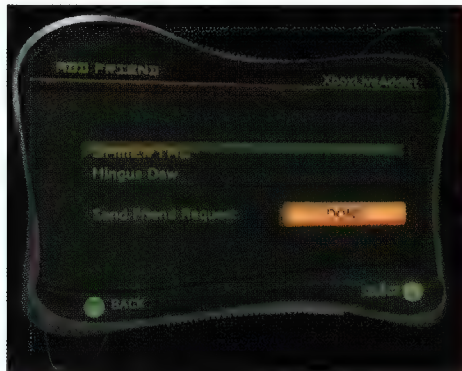


■ One of these babies will extend your time on Live by a year – just enter the code.

Five Must-Do Xbox Live Tips

1. Keep your friends close

Friends and a full friends list are the keys to your Xbox Live experience. Playing with people you know, you've met, or you've found to have similar interests is what makes Xbox Live gaming so compelling. With a well-populated friends list, you can be sure to have plenty of willing members who want to play your favorite games, the way you want to play them, when you want to play them.



How do you populate your friends list?

1. When you've enjoyed playing with a player, access your friends list from the game menu.
2. Select "Add to Friends List." If you would like to record a short audio greeting, you can do that too – you've got 15 seconds to flap your gums.

When that person accepts, you're connected and will be able to see when they're online and what they're playing, and send invites to your games.

2. Get to know OptiMatch and QuickMatch

Two of Xbox Live's most dynamic features that really impact your fast access to the best online games are OptiMatch and QuickMatch. QuickMatch offers



Real Live Gamers: Zipperman

"Zipperman" is the Gamertag for Toledo, Ohio's Andy, who you might find playing on Xbox Live in a diverse selection of titles that includes *Project Gotham Racing 2*, *Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3*, and *Tetris Worlds* – he says that he particularly "loves these old-school games a lot." The Xbox and its gigantic game-software library provide him with ample recreation when he's not hanging with his kids or working at his carpentry job.

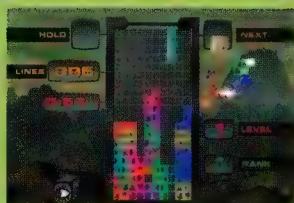
He was first exposed to Xbox Live back before the service was publicly launched. His



buddy was an Xbox Live beta tester, and he used to go to his friend's house regularly to check out how the online-game service worked. He knew it was something he wanted to be a part of, and when it went on the market, he picked it up. Currently, he plays it almost to the exclusion of single-player games. "I play more games online than I do offline. It's ten times more fun than just playing on your own."

With Xbox Live, Andy has discovered the service's power of communication. "Sometimes I call my friend (Gamertag is "ike4014") who lives about ten minutes from me," he notes. "We'll get online together and play and talk with each other. We could do it on the phone, but it's just more fun doing it over Xbox Live, playing different games and such."

On the other hand, he also realizes that the service might expose him to an entirely fresh group of people – perhaps some connecting from different parts of the globe. "I had my first talk with someone from China. I had never



talked to someone like that before, and it was wild," Andy confessed. "You can sit there and talk with others for hours." While the phone company probably won't appreciate that it's losing plenty of potential call minutes, this player-to-player capability is a powerful aspect of what Xbox Live provides to support and bolster its community.

Real Live Gamers: Sghoul

New York City-based Steven is a computer technician, but spends a lot of his free time as a musician, recording music with his "horror punk" band, Out For Blood. Despite a busy schedule, he puts in some of the remaining time on his Xbox, playing *Prince of Persia: The Sands of Time* and *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*, as well as such Xbox Live-compatible titles as *Project Gotham Racing 2* and *Tetris Worlds*, where he plays under the intimidating gamertag "Sghoul."

He's previously owned other game consoles, including a PlayStation 2 with a network adaptor that enabled him to play some games online. However, after trading in that system to get an Xbox and *Splinter Cell*, he soon discovered the benefits of Xbox Live.



"Xbox Live is so much better. The service is better and I like the fact that it's one community," Steven explains "On the PS2, you can have a

different name for each game. Xbox Live is cool because you can see what your buddy is playing, even when you're in different games."

He also noted the improved competition with multiplayer games over Xbox Live because "you're playing against real people" who can be more challenging and unpredictable than a computer-controlled opponent. "It also adds to the game when you're talking to your buddy and interacting with them while you're playing a game. It's more fun."

And then there's his appreciation for updates to the Xbox Live service that bring new features and improvements. "It's always evolving. That's great for the players," he says.

nearly instant action; OptiMatch gives you nearly infinite flexibility. Both OptiMatch and QuickMatch are supported by every Xbox Live game, and you'll quickly learn to love them both as they get you in to the games you want to play fast and easily. We'll get into them in more detail shortly.



3. Visit Rest & Relaxation Night

If you want to meet people, go to where the people are! Start off your Live experience by making friends and discovering relaxed gaming, where stats and leaderboards are forgotten and playing for fun and finding people with similar interests is the order of the day. You can ask questions of experienced gamers, add new names to your friends list, and find similarly-skilled players who will help ensure that you have the best time possible playing your favorite games—all in a stress-free environment. Think of it as a Monday night social club with controllers. For more information, be sure to visit www.xbox.com/primetime, where you'll always find the latest info, events, and (most crucially!) contests listed.

4. Opt in for news and information

Xbox Live is always changing with new activities popping up all the time, so make sure you're kept up to date on all of the news, events, games, and content downloads by opting in to receive mail and messages from Xbox. It's free to sign up. At the Xbox dashboard, click on the Opt In option to make sure you're in the loop.

5. Visit the forums

You can find hints and tips, fun facts and information, and meet new gamers of all interests at the Xbox Live forums. Point your browser to forums.xbox.com, and you'll find pages devoted to specific games, helpful information to solve problems, updates and community pages.



Quick Help Hits

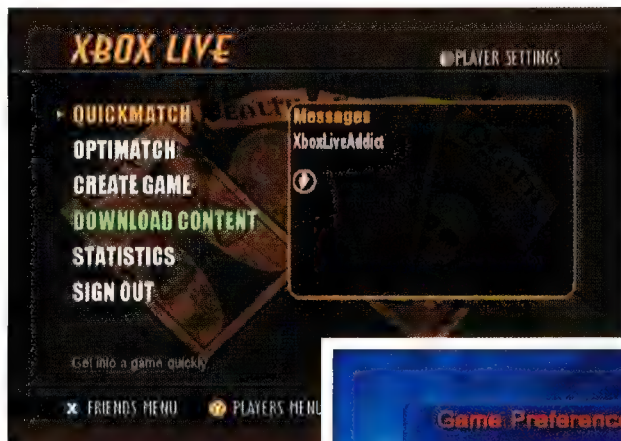
By Phone: 1-800-4MY-XBOX

Games, Hardware, and Xbox Live support online:
www.xbox.com/support

Online Forums: forums.xbox.com

Navigate Xbox Live Screens

Though each Xbox Live game is different, you'll always know where to find all the key features as they are standard in every game—helping you easily navigate every new game in your collection.



OptiMatch: Play By Your Own Rules

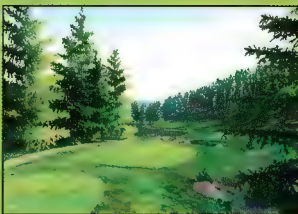
From the multiplayer menu on the front screen of your game, select the OptiMatch button. It allows you to find games with a certain number of players that you specify, on any specific level you like, in any particular game mode you prefer (such as Capture the Flag, Deathmatch, etc.). The filtering of server information lets you find a game with the optimum performance to your connection, and lets you play what you want, how you want it.



Real Live Gamers: TW002

Tommy from London in Ontario, Canada, states that he's so into Xbox Live, he hardly plays any single-player games – they're "old school... obsolete." "I was on Live as soon as it came out. That's why I went with the Xbox because I knew you could play online," he says with enthusiasm. And he's serious, estimating that he puts in about 20 hours a week competing against others around the world under his Gamertag "TW002" on a diverse selection of games that includes *Links 2004*, *Project Gotham Racing 2*, *Trivial Pursuit Unhinged*, and *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*.

Links 2004 is his favorite Xbox game, and he notes that he's in an online league with a bunch of other guys – none of whom he's met. In addition to these online games, they trade



emails as a way to get to know each other better, and some of them have talked about getting together in the future. However, there's some distance that would have to be bridged because a few of his league-mates live on other

continents. It's not something that's immediately apparent when you meet on Xbox Live. "If I ever go to Europe, I'm sure I'd have a place to stay if I needed."

He also talks about how he and his buddies make as much effort to help "newbie" duffers get their swings and putts together. While some would say such instruction might increase the competition and make it more likely for the teacher to be defeated by the student, Tommy seems less worried about his leaderboard ranking than the entertainment that the game delivers. His concern is getting as much fun out of the online experience as possible, and his strategy of sharing information is "a great way to build friendships."

Real Live Gamers: Passnot

If you go on Xbox Live and run into "Passnot," you're meeting up with John from Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He first got into the online service when Microsoft was beta-testing it, and as soon as the system was open to the public, he signed up and has been a member ever since.

He finds that he spends less time on the single-player side of a game if there's Xbox Live compatibility. "I prefer playing on Live. If a game is Live-enabled, I play it online and I'm less likely to play single-player unless it's a highly rated game. *Project Gotham Racing 2* is fun offline, too, but it's preferable to play on Live to interact and trash-talk."

John also enjoys the opportunity to meet players from other countries, including Canada, England, and Japan. He finds that such encounters enable people to not only find out more about each other, but also learn more



about their homelands. "We ask each other a lot of questions about the differences of our

countries, currencies, and when they get their games and movies."



Want to Extend the Life of Your Favorite Games?

This is a feature you shouldn't miss. Many Live-enabled games offer exclusive downloadable content that adds new items, maps, characters, and more to the game. And much of this content is absolutely free. Download new golf courses in *Links 2004*, entire extra maps for *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, and much more. Currently over 150 content downloads are available for

many of your favorite Live games, and the list is growing every week — you can get a comprehensive list of all the options at www.xbox.com/live by clicking on Content Downloads at the bottom of the page. Or get more information on the content downloads available by turning to page 36.



How Good Am I, Anyway?

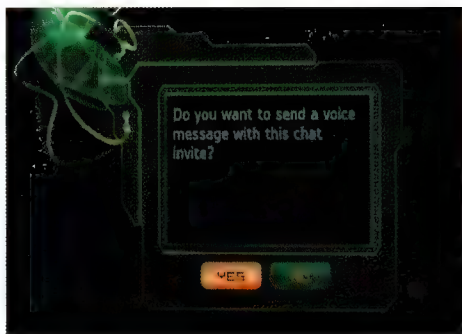
Some Live games let you see how good you are in comparison to other members with Scoreboards and Rankings. Games like *Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon: Island Thunder*, *Burnout 3: Takedown*, *Top Spin*, *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, and more support this feature. The system tracks each player's statistics and ranks them accordingly. Now you can know exactly how your scores and performance match up compared to your friends and every Xbox Live player in the world!

I Want to Reach Out and Touch Someone

Xbox Live could be an online destination even when you don't have an Xbox game in the tray! Why's that?

- >> Plug in your headset, and from the Xbox Live menu on the Dashboard, simply access the Friends menu and select the friend(s) you'd like to chat with.
- >> Highlight "Invite to Chat," and press the "A" button.
- >> That person will receive the invitation no matter what game they're playing
- >> Once they join you, you'll have a digital-cell-phone-quality real-time chat, just like you do in your games!

Want to chat with a family member while waiting to compete in that *Halo 2* match-up? Need to set that play date with a buddy from your friends list? It's easy to use this cool chat functionality, so be sure to take advantage.



The Sound of Silence

Did you know that your Xbox Live Communicator has a Mute button? Located just below the green light on the Communicator's base, the light turns red when the black button is pressed. This will save your fellow players some confusion and keep other conversations private when chatting with new people who enter the room.

This cuts both ways – you can also choose to mute someone who might be getting on your nerves in a game. In the game, hit your menu and look for the list of players. Selecting the player and choosing the Mute button should bring their jabbering to an end.

Real Live Gamers: Jobaline

Despite a busy schedule as a student and a full-time receptionist, Jo from Newport Beach, California, manages to get in a few hours

a night on Xbox Live under her Gamertag "Jobaline." Her favorite games are *Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge*, *Star Wars: Knights*

of the Old Republic, and *Tetris Worlds*. (Word to the wise: She plays a mean game of *Tetris Worlds*, so you'd better have your skills honed before you try to challenge her.)

After breaking up with a boyfriend, she found herself bored and looking for something new, so she gave Xbox Live a try. It did the trick, and has evolved into a nice change of pace when she needs a break. "It makes my day – it's a way for me to relax after a long day. It gets me out of my little routine."

Originally from Quebec, Canada, Jo speaks French fluently, but doesn't very often get the opportunity where she lives now. However, during an Xbox Live session, she ran into another player from France, which gave her a chance to chat with someone in her native tongue. "We had a long conversation in French, and it made me feel like I was home again." Leave it to Xbox Live to reopen a long-closed door.

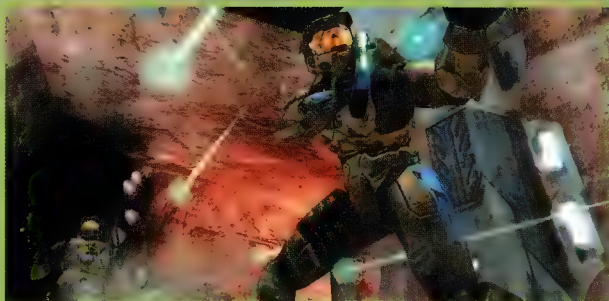


Real Live Gamers: WatirResistant

Winchester, Virginia, is home for Josh, who goes by the Gamertag "WatirResistant." While Josh serves as a network/software engineer by day, at night he is likely to be playing his Xbox, getting into such games as *Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance*, *Halo 2*, and *Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic*.

You might also find him playing *Tetris Worlds*, which is the game that got him into Xbox Live. After playing it for a while, he realized there was a whole new experience available by going against others online, so he picked up the Xbox Live Starter Kit. It provides him with a way to kick back after a long day. "I'm a big-time gamer," Josh states, "but I have a wife and two kids, and I work 40 or 50 hours a week, so I like being able to just play a little bit to relax."

While he's a RPG enthusiast, he isn't into the PC-based massively multiplayer online games because they're "a little too involved, and take up a bit too much of your personal time." However, he likes the competition that



Live-enabled games offer him, as well as the ability to play for as long or as little as he wants – if he's only has a few minutes to play, there are games that won't require committing a whole night. "I can jump in and out quickly, and I don't have to worry about all that

character development."

He also appreciates they way that Xbox Live is designed for better quality gaming. "I like it... it's well built. I like that it's strictly broadband – you don't have modem players to slow it down. Microsoft has the right idea."

Wh4t Did JOO S4y?

The language of Xbox Live

Host: This is the player who created the match. Sometimes also called the "server."

Frag: In an action game, it's a synonym for a kill.

Newbie: A new player, typically indicating unfamiliarity with the game. Help these people when you can; it's no fun if you feel like the whole world is out to get you. Remember, you were once a newbie, too!

Camping: Most commonly heard in action games, it's used to describe the act of sitting in a certain area of the map for too long, lying in wait for an unsuspecting foe to wander by. While it might be your job to guard a desirable weapon or power-up, "camping" it is often unpopular with players, but can be an effective team strategy.

Lag: It indicates a slowdown or delay in the match, most commonly caused by a poor connection to the server or a problem with the server's Internet connection. If you have questions, be sure to check out this great article at www.xbox.com/en-us/live/connect/article-lagfreegame-pg1.htm

Boot: If a user is being a problem – being obnoxious, trying to ruin everybody else's fun, stuff like that – the server can choose to remove them from the game. That's known as getting booted.

Griefer: A person who enjoys ruining other people's fun



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■ The Covenant Beam Rifle being shouldered by this smiley face-adorned Spartan is one of many new additions to the *Halo* weapon arsenal.

HALO 2



The best online shooter ever.

PUBLISHER **MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS** | DEVELOPER **BUNGIE** | PLAYERS ON XBOX LIVE **2-16** | EXTRAS **CLANS, DLC, BUNGIE.NET**

Just four words describe the multiplayer component of *Halo 2*: hail to the king. As the undisputed champion of Xbox Live, *Halo 2* is the embodiment of what Xbox Live set out to be – the home for endlessly fun games that offer a new, unique experience every single

time – and it's ludicrously simple to get into with just a couple of button presses. Join us as we take a quick tour of what *Halo 2* on Xbox Live is all about.





■ It's very obvious if you have the Overshield power-up this time around.

LOGGING IN

You'll notice that as soon as you select your profile, you're asked to log in to Xbox Live. Without even knowing it, you've just discovered *Halo 2*'s Live Aware feature. It means that if you're wading through hordes of Covenant in the single-player campaign, you're still on Xbox Live, so the buddies on your Friends List will see you and can invite you to join an online multiplayer game.



INFINITE POSSIBILITIES

Whether you're heading to Xbox Live for just one match or a hundred in a row, you're guaranteed to spend less time waiting in a lobby and more time actually playing than in any other Xbox Live offering. Here are your options:

QUICKMATCH: You know it and love it from every other Xbox Live title, and it's no different in *Halo 2*. Selecting this option tells the game that you want to play right now, and it picks a match populated by people of your approximate skill level (you earn "levels" in *Halo 2* as you rack up kills) and promptly takes you to it. No waiting!

OPTIMATCH: So you want to play quickly but you're looking for a specific type of game? Here's the place to be. You'll select a game type from the Matchmaking Playlist, and again *Halo 2* will track down a game filled with similarly skilled opponents and enlist you in the battle. Matchmaking Playlists options include Big Team Battle, Rumble Pit, and Team Skirmish, amongst many (many!) others.

ARRANGED GAME: The aforementioned options give you no direct control over the map or specific game variants but they do count towards your player ranking. An Arranged Game is the exact opposite. You can set up the specific round you like, including custom rules, the level of your choice, the vehicles you want to use, and more. You will not, however, earn any new ranking points. This is the mode to choose when you want to have a good time with your friends and not compete for worldwide bragging rights (hence the lack of ranking impact - but these stats are still viewable on Bungie.net).



Once you go hands-on with the party system, everything else seems archaic.



■ The Colossus map is frickin' huge, requiring you to have eyes in the back of your head.



Above: Prepare to lay the smack down with the Wraith, the Covenant equivalent to the Scorpion tank.

Left: The Banshee can perform barrel rolls and turbo boosts.

CLAN-DO ATTITUDE

Though it's been featured in a few other popular Xbox Live games, clan support is nevertheless a relatively new notch on Xbox Live's belt. So what is it? Essentially, it's a formal means of getting your friends together on Xbox Live and playing together as a team against other clans. There's a good chance *Halo 2* is your first exposure to the clan system, but even if it's not, *Halo 2* goes further with it than any game before. Here's what you raging clan-imals can expect when you start organizing your buddies.

AN OVERLORD IS YOU

By creating a clan, you automatically become its Overlord. Essentially, you are the utmost authority on all things in your clan. You choose the name for your group and that's it! Once the clan is created, you have the power to recruit new members, kick out existing ones, and promote or demote other members. The clan cannot be disbanded and you must transfer the Overlord status to another member before you can leave or join another clan.

WEB GEMS

Further upping the cool factor of your clan experience is Bungle.net, the home of all *Halo 2* clan pages (including yours!). This is where you'll go to review your crew's most recent Postgame Carnage Reports, stay updated on clan news, and even post messages to your fellow clanmates on your own private message board. Thus, you can easily set up your next match time, trash talk, or lay out strategies, all without having to call each clan member individually!



■ **Swords-only mode is an instant classic.** Lock on, stab, kill, repeat.



■ **Every vehicle can be boarded and hijacked.** Even the airborne Banshee.



■ **King of the Hill is downright fun** on all maps like Midship.

MAPPY MAPPY JOY JOY!

A dozen maps out of the box (provided you finish the single-player campaign...more on that in a bit) means there's plenty of variety to be found in *Halo 2* on Xbox Live. And of course, more will be coming via Downloadable Content. Here are the highlights of each.

LOCKOUT

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Jumping, running terrified
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Swords, Slayer, Team Slayer
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 4-8

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Many, many nights will be lost due to frantic, fast, and downright insane Swords matches here. Free-for-all makes for the craziest action, but some 2-on-2-on-2 Team Swords rounds can liven things up too. We recommend playing with the Motion Tracker off in order to maximize the paranoia. "Is he behind me? Is he behind me now? <STAB> OH MY GOD!"

ASCENSION

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Melee beatdowns, sniping
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Banshee (1)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Oddball Fiesta, Crazy King of the Hill
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 6-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

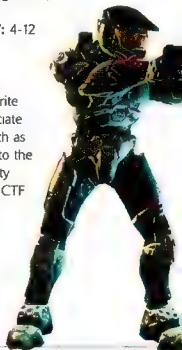
The Ball of Oddness will provide the best opportunities for trash-talking on this floating rock. Frequent elevation differences between players will result in a lot of close-quarters melee combat, and a Covenant Beam Rifle provides an excellent opportunity for snipers to take perch and pick off passers-by in the large central area. Our motto on this level: Have sniper rifle, will travel.

MIDSHIP

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Running back and forth, riding gravity lifts
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Juggernaut, CTF Classic
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 4-12

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Initially not amongst our favorite maps, we've grown to appreciate Midship due to its quirks, such as the wobbly platform leading to the surprise up top and the gravity lifts. It actually makes a great CTF map as the ability to see and shoot right into the opposing base with the Beam Rifle, combined with the always-contested central area, make for a pulse-pounding, death-filled war of attrition.





■ The enemies on Burial Mounds are vast and treacherous. Wander with extreme caution.

IVORY TOWER

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Finding a decent weapon, getting the rocket launcher
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Assault, Territones, Multi-Team Slayer
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 6-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Aesthetically unique, multi-leveled, and loaded with narrow back corridors, Ivory Tower is a pineapple hurler's paradise. That is to say, grenades fall from the sky like raindrops in this map. The rear hallways provide an ample opportunity to stick a plasma grenade on your foes, while the tiered nature of the rest of the map means you'll often be able to catch people below you duking it out. Offer them a skyward surprise!

BURIAL MOUNDS

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Running in a zigzag pattern, finding long-range weapons
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Ghost (1), Warthog (1)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** King of the Hill, Territories, 1-Flag CTF
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 8-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

A single, hollowed-out hull of a base stands amongst a vast sea of sand dunes, and we ask ourselves, "Why couldn't there have been more vehicles?" Still, the pair of stationary gun turrets makes for some entertaining moments as you cut down foes who frantically try to evade your fire in the middle of a wide-open desert with no cover whatsoever. We love a good King of the Hill match on Burial Mounds, and the more players here, the merrier.

COLOSSUS

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Shooting plasma barrels, moving in pairs
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Slayer, Team Slayer, Juggernaut
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 10-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Don't even bother starting a match on this map without at least eight players (we recommend ten or more), but once you have the numbers, there's a lot of action to be had here. This map is very vertical, and there are conveyor belts scattered about that slowly move highly explosive plasma barrels around. Thus, a good old-fashioned Slayer brawl is our game of choice in Colossus, but if you're crazy, try a CTF game.



■ There's only one Rocket Launcher on Burial Mounds. Use it wisely.



■ Ironically, Colossus is the most appropriate name for this map.

Games of Live! Halo 2



■ Wait for it... wait for it... now STAB!

ZANZIBAR

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Team coordination, map knowledge
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Warthog (1), Ghost (2)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** 1-Flag CTF, Single Bomb Assault
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 8-12

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

It was the first map Bungie used to show off *Halo 2*'s multiplayer, and for good reason: this is one of the best in the game in terms of level design. Obviously built with round-by-round game types in mind (such as 1-Flag CTF and Single Bomb Assault), Zanzibar has tons of cool interactive elements and hidden goodies. Coordinating multi-pronged attacks on offense and maintaining excellent communication on defense are the keys to success.



■ Battling for a single control point in Territories mode on Headlong is chaotic fun.

HEADLONG

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Teleporting, moving in packs
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Ghost (2), Warthog (2), Banshee (1)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** Territorines, Assault
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 8-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Urban to the max, the war-torn cityscape of Headlong has plenty of everything: outdoor areas, indoor spaces, teleporters, platformer-style jumping, vehicles, and multi-story mayhem. You will not find a better Territorines map than this one, and marching through the buildings with four teammates surrounding a friend with the bomb in Assault is like a page out of *Rainbow Six*...only better.

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■ This Warthog just found out how powerful the Wraith is on the WaterWorks map.



■ Behold! Blood Gulch returns, but way better, as Coagulation.

WATERWORKS

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Driving vehicles, riding in vehicles, base defense
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Wraith (2), Ghost (4), Warthog (2), Banshee (2)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** CTF Classic, Assault
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 10-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

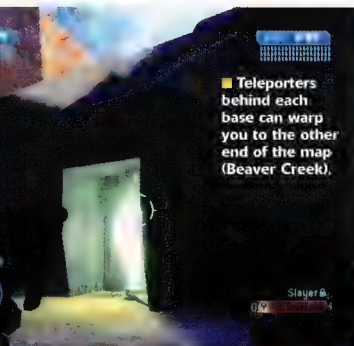
Aside from Coagulation (see below), Waterworks is *Halo 2*'s most obviously classic large-vehicular-battle map. Crammed with nearly every ride in the game, this level is one of our favorites. It's balanced (gun turrets for defense at each base), has great weapon variety (those teleporters lead to something fun...), and even interactive (hop in the Banshee and see if you can manage to shoot down the stalactites on the ceiling and crush a foe on the ground)

COAGULATION

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Well-timed flag runs, excellent Warthog driving skills
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** Warthog (2), Banshee (2), Ghost (2)
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** CTF Classic, Crazy King
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 8-12

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

If it looks familiar, there's a reason. This is Blood Gulch 2, a.k.a. Coagulation. It's where all *Halo 2* CTF scores go to be settled. Aged like a fine wine, the new Gulch offers boulders to ward off sniper attacks, teleport exit pads that have shifted closer to each base (the map must sit in the middle of two tectonic plates...), and a Batcave-like basement in each base that houses a Banshee. Boarding alone changes the entire dynamic of this map from its *Halo 1* incarnation, and the Gulch has now been re-balanced so that it doesn't suck so bad to be the blue team (i.e. no Scorpions by default and no wicked hill to park them on and tank-camp from). This is the ultimate Capture the Flag map, bar none.



BEAVER CREEK

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Running for the overshield, dual-wielding
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** CTF Classic, Assault
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 6-10

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

What would happen if dam-building critters infested Halo 1's Battle Creek? Nothing, apparently, as this is a near-exact conversion of the original map to Halo 2. It still rocks.

FOUNDATION

- **BASIC ELEMENTS:** Your mad skillz
- **DEFAULT VEHICLES:** None
- **BEST GAME TYPES:** King of the Hill, Slayer
- **IDEAL PLAYER COUNT:** 4-16

THE OFFICIAL XBOX MAGAZINE TAKE:

Finish the game on any skill level to unlock it. Once you do, you'll find an octagon-shaped arena with a couple of rocket launchers, a couple of shotguns, and a tantalizing sword in the middle. This map has a decidedly old-school flavor, and that's okay with us. **XBOX**



1UP 170 HIGH SCORE 1420

■ Xbox Live Arcade automatically signs you in while you play so friends can send you game invites.

Xbox Live Arcade

Don't call it "casual gaming" – call it "bite-sized stress relief"



It's been a hard day. You've finally got a half hour to yourself to unwind, but the prospect of a long *Madden* or *Pandora Tomorrow* showdown doesn't seem feasible – not on your schedule, anyway. What's a time-crunched gamer to do? Visit the Xbox Live Arcade – it's open 24/7, and it's full of snack-sized gaming experiences.

No Tokens Necessary

Xbox Live Arcade wants to offer a short, punchy game experience for everyone – and it just might pull it off. With offerings from addictive puzzle games to old-school twitchfests to authentic retro arcade titles, Xbox Live Arcade certainly has the potential for a wide appeal.

THE ARCADE'S OFFERINGS ARE DIVIDED INTO A SEVERAL GENRES:

■ **Retro Classics** are what they sound like – old-school arcade games like *Pole Position*, *Galaga*, and *Ms. Pac-Man* in all their post-coin-op glory. These are the games that built gaming into what it is today.

■ **Puzzle & Word** games include the ubiquitous *Bejeweled*, along with brainteasers like *Super*



Collapse II and *Dangerous Mines*. If it involves matching colors and cursing loudly at your mistakes, you'll find it here.

■ Acton & Arcade offers modern twists on classic gameplay. You might not recognize names like *Guardian* or *Alien Sky* right away, but you'll know the moment you bet and bluff.

■ Card & Board games are mostly cards right now - *Hardwood Solitaire* could eat all the other solitaire games for lunch, thanks to its 100 variations. Future titles will take advantage of the games that let you bet and bluff.

■ Social Sports...that's a nice way of saying "games where you can drink at the same time and still enjoy yourself." *Bankshot Billiards* will be the first out of the gate, and more in that vein are in development.

■ Strategy & Sims titles sound a bit more involved, but turn-based challenges like *Lemonade Tycoon 2: New York Edition* can still be played in tips rather than gulps.

In addition to the main six categories, you'll also find the self-explanatory New Releases and My Games appear in the Arcade interface. It's all pretty intuitive.

The C-Word

Wait a second...web-based time-wasters like solitaire and *Super Collapse II* on the Xbox? The home to *Halo* and the rifle range of *Rainbow Six*? Why is Microsoft bringing so-called grandma games to an audience that sees "casual gaming" as such a dirty word?

"Casual gaming" is not a dirty word at all, but I don't think the term would resonate with our audience anyway," says Darryl Saunders, Microsoft's product manager of Xbox Live Arcade. "The catchword we've been using is 'broad appeal.' Another phrase we've been using is 'games for everybody.'"

Consider this: Way more people enjoy the simple pleasures of games like *Bejeweled* and card games on a daily basis than even the mightiest online shooters. "There's 85 million people who get into this gaming space pretty aggressively," says Saunders. And no, it's not all grandmothers and insomniacs. There's something undeniably fun about games that you can enjoy in short chunks at your own pace. After all, when was the last time you found yourself waiting around for friends and started playing around with your cell phone to kill time, whether it happened to have games on it or not? Apply that to Xbox Live when you need to unwind for 10 minutes at the end of a tough day or while you're waiting for friends to show up for a big clan match in *Splinter Cell Chaos Theory*. There's always time for a quick round of *Galaga* - and it'll be there whenever you want it. "I think it's gonna be a sleeper," says Saunders.

And to the geeks in the audience, there's something else to consider. "Hardcore gamers see Arcade and say 'Hey, I can sit down with my girlfriend and play this game,'" adds Saunders.

Money Matters

It's fun...but at what cost? A lower one, that's what. Until January 31, you can take advantage of some introductory pricing specials to build your Xbox Live Arcade library quickly.

\$9.99 TITLES (regular price \$19.99):

- *Alien Sky*
- *Bejeweled*
- *Hardwood Solitaire*
- *Ricochet Lost Worlds*
- *Ruckus Buck's Dangerous Mines*
- *Super Collapse II*
- *Astropop*
- *Mutant Storm*

\$14.99 TITLES:

- *Namco Vintage* (includes *Galaga*, *Dig Dug*, and *Pole Position*)

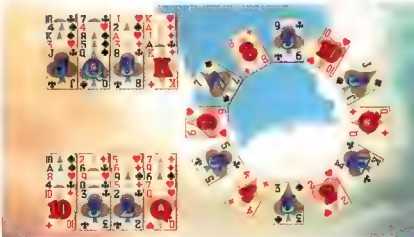
\$19.99 TITLES:

- *Guardian*
- *Fuzzee Fever* (multiplayer)
- *Feeding Frenzy*
- *Zuma*

Whereas games like *Counter-Strike* might seem imposing to your loved ones who haven't yet been bitten by the Xbox bug, Arcade could be the perfect introduction. After all, games like *Bejeweled* and *Dig Dug* have universal appeal and virtually no learning curve, and they can be played by more than one person sitting on the couch, offering comfortable multiplayer experiences both online and off.

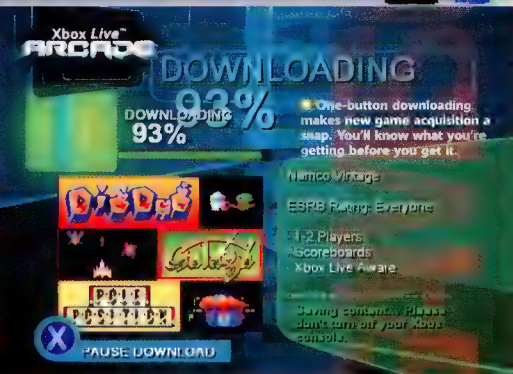
Online All The Time

Arcade serves up plenty of other interesting Xbox Live perks, primarily Live Awareness. Go ahead and blast aliens in that game of *Guardian* guilt-free - everyone on your Friends List can see what you're playing, and you won't



Hardwood Solitaire offers customizable backgrounds, card graphics, and soundtracks - not to mention game variations you've never seen before.

Splitting lanes in *Pole Position* is no easier now than it was back in the day.



miss an invite to go join them in a different game. This is especially handy if you're supposed to rendezvous with friends for a *Halo 2* fragfest and they're running late for you're so eager you're early. Get that lemonade stand earning major bucks while you cool your heels – and upload a few scores to the leaderboard while you're at it so you and your friends can have enjoyable arguments over who can withstand the most pressure in *Super Collapse II*. Since the games run from your hard drive, you don't need to pop in a separate disc to enjoy them, so switching from Arcade titles to your latest disc-based acquisition is a snap.

While the offerings in the Arcade aren't free

(save your quarters, literally and figuratively – games run from \$9.99 to \$19.99), you can check out any of the games without spending a cent. Just download the title you'd like to sample and within seconds, you'll be playing a trial version. If you like the game enough to keep it, just choose the Buy option, and the version on your Xbox hard drive will be unlocked for unrestricted play.

In order to check out the games, you'll need an Xbox Live Arcade launcher disc, and fortunately you have one – it's the disc that came with this magazine. Run it and you'll find not only the software you need to enjoy everything Arcade has to offer, but a free, totally unlocked version of *Ms. Pac-Man* that's only available on the disc and will only be available for a limited time. Plus, it includes a \$10 rebate offer so you can get another downloadable game for free.

Open for Business

The future of Xbox Live Arcade is still evolving, but Saunders says the team expects to roll out a whopping 50 games by the end of 2005, a

few every month. Most of the launch titles are single-player Live Aware experiences, and some enable same-screen play or allow you to pass the controller. As the service gets established, you'll see more online multiplayer games in the vein of the four-player action/puzzler *Fuzzee Fever*, which will be available at launch.

A few more big-name games have surfaced as being in development, including more coin-op classics and the recently revitalized card game of choice, poker. After all, armed with a Communicator and a list of friends, Xbox Live Arcade can easily replicate your old poker game, complete with friendly banter and a bit of trash-talking – even if you're in Petaluma and your friends are in Pittsburgh (or Paris, for that matter).

One thing's clear, anyway: Microsoft's not bluffing. For "casual gaming," the plans for Xbox Live Arcade seem mighty aggressive. **XBOX**



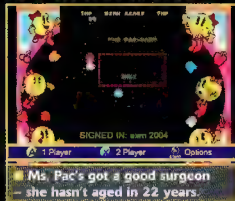
You can easily see and play all the games you've purchased from the My Games menu – or hit your Friends List, for that matter.

Running Through the Arcade

We put a handful of the launch titles through their paces

MS. PAC-MAN

Developer: Namco/Mass Media
Extras: It's free and on the CD



■ Ms. Pac's got a good surgeon – she hasn't aged in 22 years.

the included CD, and you won't be able to get it forever – this game will only be made available to Xbox Live Arcade early adopters.

Arguably the best *Pac* game ever created, *Ms. Pac-Man*'s appearance in the Arcade is a natural. She looks a little squished (it is, after all, a vertical playfield that originally was displayed on vertical monitors), but you can increase the screen size if you have a large TV. This game just never gets old, but be aware that you won't be able to get *Ms. Pac-Man* without

NAMCO VINTAGE

Developer: Namco/Mass Media
Extras: Scoreboards, Live Aware



■ Galaga: the best 2D space shooter ever? Believe it.

Three classics, one easy download. The *Namco Vintage* pack offers *Dig Dug*, *Galaga*, and *Pole Position* in all their coin-op glory. Two players can pass the controller on *Galaga* and *Dig Dug* for offline, same-couch play. All the old-school strategies can be employed once again – they're emulated versions of the original arcade code.

BEJEWELED

Developer: PopCap Games/Oberon Media

Extras: Scoreboards, Live Aware
Could this be the best puzzle game since *Tetris*? The mechanics are easy to learn, tough to master, and it's so addictive it's sickening – sounds like the same ballpark. *Bejeweled* looks crisp and clean on Xbox, and it's as easy to kill five minutes as it is 50. The nice thing is you won't feel bad ditching in the middle of a game if friends sign in with a request to play *Halo 2* – those gems will always need re-arranging.

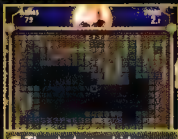


■ This game is a sensation for good reason.

RUCKUS BUCK'S DANGEROUS MINES

Developer: Silver Creek Entertainment
Extras: Custom soundtracks, Scoreboards, Live Aware

Think *Minesweeper* for a new generation – better graphics, more options, and Live Awareness. Three variations keep it from being the same old game: Classic is the hide-and-seek gameplay most people are familiar with. Free Edge speeds up the beginning of the game since no mines are located on the board's outer squares. However, the experts should head to Gauntlet, which combines Free Edge with Xbox Live leaderboards for worldwide ranking. Think you're good at uncovering jewels and avoiding bombs? Here's your chance to prove it.



■ The darkness hides booty – and bombs

SUPER COLLAPSE II

Developer: GameHouse/Oberon Media
Extras: Scoreboards, Live Aware

What if the bricks didn't fall – what if you had to make them disappear by force? That's the idea behind *Super Collapse II*, which offers four variations on block-removal gameplay: Traditional, where you must clear the board (preferably in large chunks) of like-colored blocks that insist on appearing



■ Release Mode's double-edged danger zones are just cruel.

from the bottom of the screen; Puzzle, which gives you arrangements that you have to figure out how to eliminate; Release, a brutal version where the blocks come from the top and the bottom; and Strategy, an experts-only mode where every one of your actions can cause a devastating reaction. Short version? It's plenty of puzzle goodness.

RICOCET LOST WORLDS

Developer: Reflexive Entertainment
Extras: 480p, 720p, Scoreboards, Live Aware



■ Classic arcade action in 720p? Don't knock it 'til you try it.

Yes, you read that right – it's *Breakout* on steroids and in high-def. Take the enduring gameplay of *Arkanoid*, crank up the visual panache, throw in support for progressive-scan displays, and you've got a pretty damned impressive upgrade of a classic game of skill. The L and R triggers zip you to

the extreme edges of the playfield for quick saves – a nice touch.

HARDWOOD SOLITAIRE

Developer: Silver Creek Entertainment
Extras: Custom soundtracks, Scoreboards, Live Aware

"Oh, big deal – solitaire." No, it's a huge deal – there are 105 game types, some of them original and some variations on the classic card game that range from *Aces Up* to *Zodiac*. If you want to go to time-tested favorites like *FreeCell*, *Golf*, or *Klondike*, you're covered – but there are tons of others you may have never experienced, like *Grandfather's Clock* and *Sultan*, that will mean you never look at a deck of cards the same way again. The cards and playfield can be changed to your liking, and you can use your own custom soundtracks if you don't care for the mystical elves-in-the-



■ Yes, that's right – over 100 new ways to play with yourself.



■ Two against one.
Advantage: spies.

Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell **Chaos Theory** *Good things come in threes*

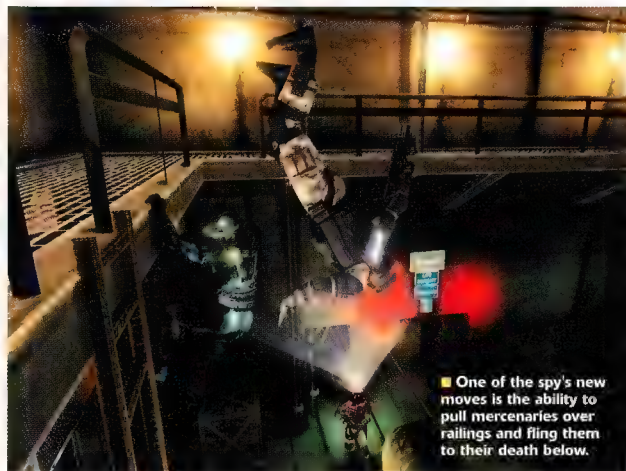
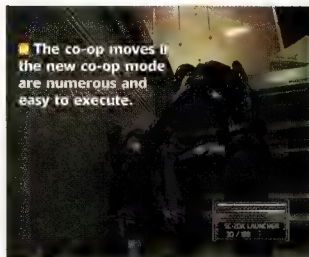
DEVELOPER **UBISOFT MONTREAL** PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** PLAYERS ON LIVE 2 (COOPERATIVE MODE),
2-4 (ADVERSARIAL MODE) EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, STAT TRACKING, CLANS**
RELEASE DATE **MARCH 2005**

The greatness of the upcoming new *Splinter Cell*'s multiplayer is difficult to explain. If you've played *Pandora Tomorrow*, then you know a bit of what to expect. For the uninitiated, though, we highly recommend you pick up the aforementioned game and discover it for yourself. But we're here to serve, so read on for more about one of Xbox Live's most unique gaming experiences.

A Shadowy Background

If you're new to *Splinter Cell*, know that it is the greatest example of stealth action on the face of the earth. And it keeps getting better each time out. Taking to the shadows for cover and using a wealth of near-future military technology, you seek out and destroy the peace-threatening enemy, either taking their life with your rifle or





surprising them into a chokehold and snapping their necks with the lethal brute force.

What you've just read may sound like a description of the single-player game, but this is an Xbox Live magazine, remember? Indeed, the previous text describes the multiplayer portion of *Chaos Theory*. There are two stunning fully Xbox Live-enabled multiplayer modes available, and the odds of you being able to resist either one are slim.

Dynamic Duo Part One

Tension is the name of the game in each *Splinter Cell*. This is taken to new heights in *Chaos Theory*'s two-player cooperative mode. While you don't take up Sam Fisher's cause with a friend in the standard campaign, you do embark on a separate, fully fleshed-out side story in cooperative mode. Playing as a pair of unnamed Shadownet operatives in the NSA, you've got all of Fisher's training and all of his moves. Together with your compatriot, you must work your way through four missions designed specifically for co-op play (though the final number of out-of-the-box missions is subject to change, and Ubisoft strongly

hinted that more may be released later via Xbox Live downloadable content).

One of the missions we played took place in New York City's Grand Central Station. Beginning in the sewer system underneath the building, we were tasked with eventually making our way up to the main floor and intercepting a phone call.

Starting side-by-side in an echo-prone tunnel, you'll be shocked at the attention to detail the development team has put forth on Live. Just like any other Live title, you can speak to each other using the Communicator. In *Chaos Theory*, however, even this seemingly normal piece of equipment is used to ratchet up the tension. Indeed, you must whisper into your microphone because if you speak too loudly, the in-game noise meter will spike, alerting the enemies to your presence. In fact, Ubisoft warned us that if you had a noticeable amount of background

noise — say, your significant other yelling at you for playing games too much — the Communicator would actually pick up that noise and blow your cover in the game. Now that's immersion!

Once we adjusted to the refined level of communication and reminded ourselves that we should move slowly everywhere we went in order to minimize noise, we rounded the first corner and encountered our first foe: a lone, patrolling, sufficiently armed terrorist. And it's here where you get your first chance to test out one of the many contextual co-op moves: the Tormoenage.

Essentially, it's a human missile. One of you puts his back to the direction of the enemy, crouches, and presses the co-op action button (the Black button). This locks the crouched spy in place, and he can then only use the left thumbstick to control the angle he's facing. As the enemy approaches (you should be in the dark, between the lights, so the terrorist can't see you), the second player runs toward his buddy and presses Black, triggering the move. We watched with a satisfied grin as we torpedoed toward the enemy, barreling into him and knocking him out.

A few more corridors and corners later, you'll come to an old elevator shaft. One operative throws a rope down while the other player grabs on and climbs down. The climber can only move the up and down, while the holder must not only move his partner to the right or left if necessary, but also use the thumbstick to hold the rope still. Too much play means



Mercenaries should move in pairs whenever possible in order to ensure that all angles are covered.

Games of Live: Chaos Theory



Shoot a sticky camera onto the wall adjacent to the guard, then release the camera's knockout gas.

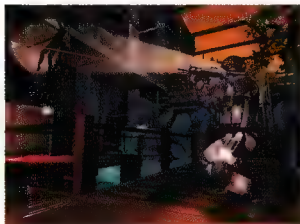


The grounded merc is a little too late to save his airborne partner.

noise, and as you now know, noise means alerted and curious enemies

After splitting up, we reconvened in a subway-car-storage facility with one of us near the ceiling in an airshaft and the other below the room. The high man can shoot out the lights, sending the terrorists into a panic, and the low man can fire a sticky camera out of his hiding hole and onto the ceiling, unveiling a bird's-eye view of the whole area. You can then talk to each other and coordinate your attack with one of you using gadgets to distract while the other sneaks up behind and neutralizes each enemy.

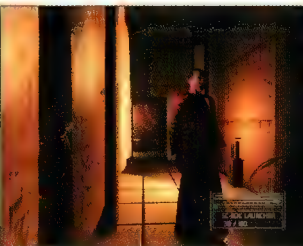
Alas, we wanted to try some of the other co-op missions and moves, such as boost and ladder (one player cups his hands, the other gets boosted up to a high ledge, and the booster then uses the hanger as a human ladder) and lock picking (both spies must coordinate to disable a two-piece alarm system or lock simultaneously), but we had



Uh-oh. This spy's been spotted. Time to run away.



One spy hacks while the other covers. Teamwork in co-op is essential.



Contextual moves like blowing out a candle add a healthy dose of "cool" as well as realism.

to make good use of our limited play time by checking out the other major Xbox Live portion of *Chaos Theory*: Adversarial Mode.

Dynamic Duo Part Two

When you, the Xbox Live connoisseur, have played team-based multiplayer modes like Capture the Flag, King of the Hill, and Tag in countless action games, you start to think you've seen it all. Then *Splinter Cell Chaos Theory* comes along and changes everything.

It's a two-on-two format, but each pair is radically different. Spies play much like the co-op spies or Sam Fisher in the single-player campaign: quiet, non-lethal, agile, and fast. They must infiltrate an area and steal data discs or complete other objectives. The other duo is a pair of mercenaries: heavily armed, fully lethal, tough-as-nails tanks whose goal is to stop (read: kill) the invading spies.

Each team has a unique set of gadgets used to slow or stop the opposition. Spies have night vision, thermal vision, flashbang grenades, smoke grenades, and sticky cameras with gas-spewing attachments, among other toys. They can also use each other as the team-up moves from co-op mode are available here, too. The mercenaries have laser, proximity, and poison mines that they can place nearly anywhere, as well as tasers, camera networks, a gas mask, and of course, a semi automatic rifle.

The balance between the two radically different sides has been refined from "solid" in *Pandora Tomorrow's* Adversarial Mode to "near



perfect" even in our early test of the *Chaos Theory* version. Spies can sneak up behind mercs, grab them from behind, taunt them with the Communicator, and then snap their necks (it is, in fact, the spies' only lethal means of attack), but the mercs now have a counter. They can swat a too-close-for-comfort spy with the butt of their weapon, knocking the black-clad Shadownet operative to the ground; the mercenary can then put his boot to the spy's throat, trash talk with the Communicator, and then crush the infiltrator's neck, killing him.

Spy Games

Ultimately, the resulting battles are captivating chess matches that require dedicated communication with your teammate, intelligence, and patience. There has never been an Xbox Live game like this before, and we guarantee you'll be hooked once you give it a try.

Engage your mind, keep your wits about you, and we'll see you online.



Up for Downloads

Who doesn't like free stuff?



The Office map is a fan favorite – and it's free.

The old model used to be pretty straightforward: You buy a game, you play it, and then you think fondly of it as it collects dust on your shelf. Well, no more, thanks to downloadable content. When you grow tired of the same old maps in *Unreal Championship*, simply download new ones to freshen your fraggin'. If you've put all the planes through their paces in *Secret Weapons Over Normandy*, it takes just a few seconds to fill your hangar with more death from above.

The way it works is simple. Load up any of the games on this list and select Xbox Live from the menu. You'll then see an option called Download Content. Select it and you'll see what extra goodies the game has to offer. Most downloads take only a few seconds; some of the beefiest content may take more than a minute. Once you've downloaded the bonus materials, they're yours to keep, stored on your hard drive. Even if you're renting a game from a store or borrowing a game from a friend, you can play with the new content as soon as you've taken a couple of seconds to download it (as long as your Xbox Live account is in good working order).

Check out the games below and try it for yourself. Thanks to Xbox Live, obsolescence is a thing of the past.

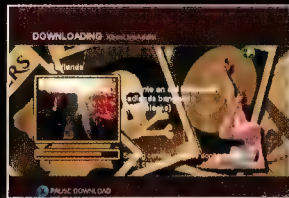
Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge

- NEW PLANES: Vampire, Hellhound, Firebrand, and Fury
- NEW MAPS: Caverns, Badlands, Lost Plateau
- NEW GAME TYPES: Gunheist, Chicken Pox

It's no coincidence that the game that currently ships with the Xbox Live Starter Kit features a wealth of extra downloadable content. Four new planes, three new maps (some of them modifications of the coolest single-player missions), and two new play modes practically make *Crimson Skies* a game and a half.



- Chicken Pox and Gun Heist offer more online play options.



- You survived Badlands in single-player, but how will you do when human opponents are on your tail?



- Planes and games and dimes – oh my!

FREE DOWNLOADS

AMPED 2

- NEW SLOPES: Sky, Pioneer, and Slopestyle 2003

ARMED & DANGEROUS

- LILY'S SUMMER HOME MISSION

BRUTE FORCE

- NEW DEATHMATCH MAPS: Prisoner's Lament, Cerulean, Lockjaw

CONFLICT: DESERT STORM II – BACK TO BAGHDAD

- NEW SKINS: U.S. Woodland, British DPM, and Iraqi Republican Guard

COUNTER-STRIKE

- NEW MAPS: Office and Inferno

LINKS 2004

- ARIZONA'S GALLERY GOLF COURSE
- MAUI'S PLANTATION GOLF COURSE
- OCEAN MILL DIRECTOR'S CUT FANTASY GOLF COURSE

MAGIC: THE GATHERING – BATTLEGROUND

- FIVE NEW SORCERIES
- FIVE NEW CREATURES
- TEN NEW SPELLS



MechAssault

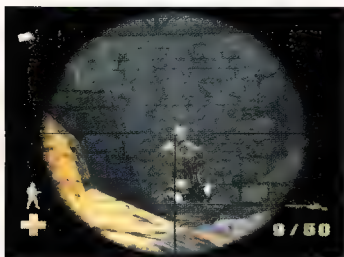
NEW MECHS: Loki, Hellbringer, Raven, and Corvus
NEW MAPS: Hell's Kitchen, Demolition Town, Rock Solid, Jotenheim
NEW GAME TYPES: Capture the Flag, Giant Killers, Scout/Team Scout, Skirmish/Team Skirmish

Talk about heavy metal. Despite coming out in 2002, *MechAssault* is still a hugely popular Xbox Live title – and these downloads are almost certainly part of the reason. Not content with merely new mechs and maps, *MechAssault* offers entirely new ways to play.



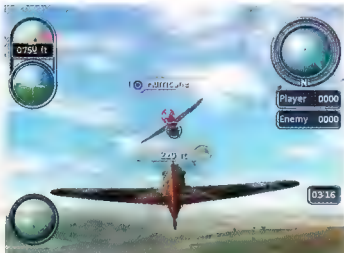
MX SUPERFLY

- BACKYARD BASH AND MALL JUMP TRACKS
- NEW RIDERS



RETURN TO CASTLE WOLFENSTEIN: TIDES OF WAR

- NEW MISSIONS: Barn, Safe, Chateau



Midtown Madness 3



Don't try this at home – only try it on Xbox Live.

- NEW CARS: Carica, Furious, LastKraftWagen, Ambassador, R4000, Shopper, Trasher, Concept, Rusty, Formula Midtown
- 20 NEW WASHINGTON D.C. RACES
- 20 NEW PARIS RACES

Seems like every few weeks, a new download was available for *Midtown Madness 3* – and hey, it was. An impressive 10 new cars, from sleek sporty imports to crazy crap like a shopping cart with a hemi in it, are yours to drive with reckless (but not necessarily wrackless) abandon through a whopping 40 new checkpoint races on the streets of Paris and Washington D.C.

SECRET WEAPONS OVER NORMANDY

- NEW MISSIONS: Last Chancel, Furious Engel, Escape from Tripoli
- NEW PLANES: Ki-61, He162 Volksjager, Macchi 202

SOLDIER OF FORTUNE II: DOUBLE HELIX

- NEW MAPS: Kowloon Market, Oil Rig, Ruins, Kremenchug Hydroelectric, Cheapshot Forest

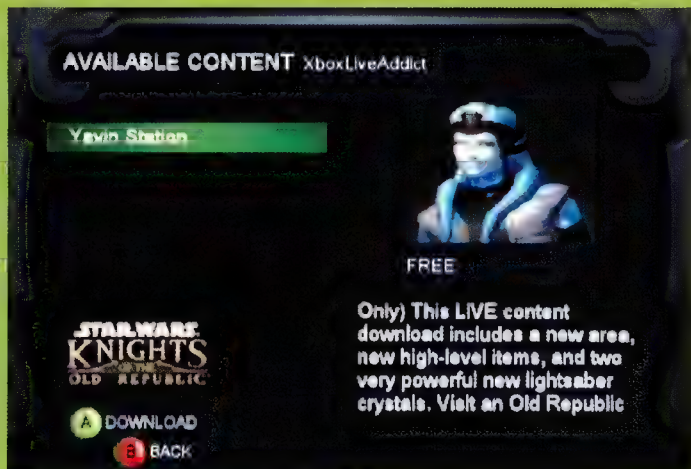


Up for Downloads continued

Star Wars: Knights of the Old Republic

NEW AREA: Yavin Station

While most of the downloads listed here are for use in multiplayer games on Live, *KOTOR* is a single-player game, so LucasArts created something totally different for Live-enabled fans a few months after the game had been out: Yavin Station, an outpost near a gas giant with many moons, one of which would be the Rebel Alliance headquarters and the future battleground for the destruction of the Death Star. For Xbox gamers, Yavin offers more than just a footnote to *Star Wars* lore; it's the only place to get the bitchin' Light Exoskeleton armor and some Advanced Stabilizer Gloves with Blaster Bolt Deflection. If that means nothing to you right now, trust us, it's cool, and very much worth the free download. And did we mention *KOTOR* is now only \$20?



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3

■ NEW MAPS: Meat Factory, Scharins, Close Quarter, Parkade, and Train Yard



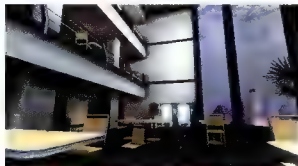
TOM CLANCY'S GHOST RECON: ISLAND THUNDER

■ NEW MAPS: Refinery, Beach, Ghost Town, Train Depot, Aurora, Riverbed, Road Block, Tank, Ruins



TOEJAM AND EARL 3: MISSION TO EARTH

■ NEW CHARACTERS: Suteki, Earl Bot, Nerdy Toejam
■ NEW LEVELS: Funkadelic, Hades Maze



TOM CLANCY'S RAINBOW SIX 3: BLACK ARROW

■ NEW MAP: Village



TOM CLANCY'S SPLINTER CELL

■ NEW MISSIONS: Kola Cell, Vselka Infiltration, Vselka Submarine



UNREAL CHAMPIONSHIP

■ NEW LEVELS: Inferno, Aquamortis, Leviathan, OtarosRun

■ You'll have to dig deep in your bag of tricks to conquer Epilogue #1. Like using your smoke grenades, for instance.

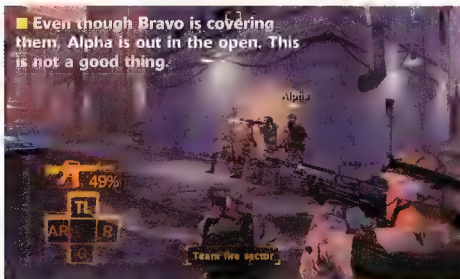


Full Spectrum Warrior

Time to get your asses back into action, Charlie 90. Your favorite foul-mouthed Army squad can rest when it's dead – this free download picks up after your last sit rep, dumping you right back into Zekistan after the conclusion of the core game's final mission for Epilogues #1 and #2.

Chances are you'll probably download this once you've finished the rest of the game, and believe us, that'd be a wise choice as these two missions are tough. You'll have to deal with snipers hidden in high spots, cleverly concealed terrorists, and bad guys who are generally angrier and meaner than you're used to. You will no doubt run into multiple instances where you will stop and scratch your head, wondering how to position Alpha and Bravo teams. Still, it's quite the tasty challenge.

■ Even though Bravo is covering them, Alpha is out in the open. This is not a good thing.



■ Your CO will relay mission instructions to you. Pay attention.



■ Now those are some sweet tactics. Nothing that comes along there is going to survive.



■ In addition to being a blast, *FSW* is the best-looking military game out there.



PREMIUM DOWNLOADS

Free is always good – but sometimes, you get what you pay for, too. Premium downloads offer game-extending content with a little more kick than you might expect for the meager prices. For a measly \$5, check out what you can do with and get from some of Xbox Live's best and brightest.

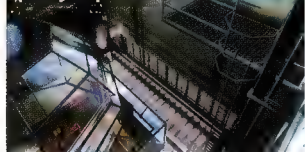
Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell: Pandora Tomorrow

It's not that *Pandora Tomorrow* didn't have plenty of multiplayer goodness packed into its disc in the first place, but that didn't stop Ubisoft from upping the ante. Better still, here's a surprise – the two new levels contained in the 1 Spy map pack (\$4.99) are widely regarded as downright better than the maps that shipped with the game. Don't believe it? There's no substitute for experience, but check out ours until you get the chance to amass your own.

FEDERAL BANK

Likely due to the popularity of "Warehouse," the "Federal Bank" level is set up similarly in that spies must neutralize an ND133 in one area before the next area and its ND133 are unlocked. Thus, if you don't like "Warehouse," this probably won't be your cup of tea either, but considering the number of "Warehouse" servers that are always available, chances are pretty high you'll get your money's worth.

■ As spies, ignore the pretty scenery at the starting point, slide down that ladder, and get inside as quickly as possible.



VAULT CHAMBER

Spies start on the roof of the building and have a choice of two vent shafts to enter through. One takes them directly to the vault chamber, where all of the ND133s are located, and the second leads to adjacent rooms where the lighting system can be hacked and the electromagnetic lock can be activated, thus negating one of the mercenaries' vision modes in the chamber.

Once inside the chamber, there are multiple ND133s on both the ground level and upstairs area, so coordination and cooperation between mercenaries is a must. Also, many of the ND133 in this room are hidden amongst boxes and crates, requiring precision grenade-lobbing from the mercs.



■ Mercs shouldn't hang out too long in the lobby area, but instead stay closer to the ND133 in the vault chamber.

GOLD RESERVE

Once the spies have neutralized an ND133 in the vault chamber, a vent shaft and doors in the room open to unlock the way to the downstairs gold reserve, where one more ND133 must be taken

care of. Spies have the option of going straight for the reserve or stopping off in the maze-like safe deposit room, where a handy light-killing hack awaits you

It is very difficult for the spies to take the



■ After neutralizing the chamber's ND133, the doors leading the way to the gold reserve will (slowly) open.

gold reserve once the mercs have had a chance to hunker down and place some mines, so again cooperation is key. Sticky cameras are useful both to see where the mercs are and to gas the ARGUS foes, and the overall claustrophobia for both sides in this room makes for some very tense, exciting matches.

While this map can be tough on spies due to the fact that all of the ND133s you're going after are always in the same room, there are light hacks and electromagnetic hacks in place to balance things out. We like this more than "Warehouse."

RIVER MALL

Big, balanced, and beautiful, "River Mall" is divided into two primary areas.

LOBBY

With a giant neon "River Mall" sign on the second level and a gorgeous, glass waterfall structure on the first floor, the front lobby area of "The Mall," as we've become accustomed to calling it, sees a lot of action, and not just because it's directly adjacent to the spies' starting location. Behind the waterfall downstairs is a room with hacks that shut off a vent fan and lights in the lobby. In front of the waterfall is an ND133.

There are no fewer than six entry points for the spies into the lobby coming out of their starting location, and on the second level, there's a videogame store that, besides containing an ND133, is loaded with – you guessed it – Ubisoft games on the shelves!

HI-FI SHOWROOM

Any Xbox gamer should feel right at home here as this area is loaded with high-tech stereo and home-theater equipment. With three distinct areas, plenty of vent shafts and ceilings to crawl around

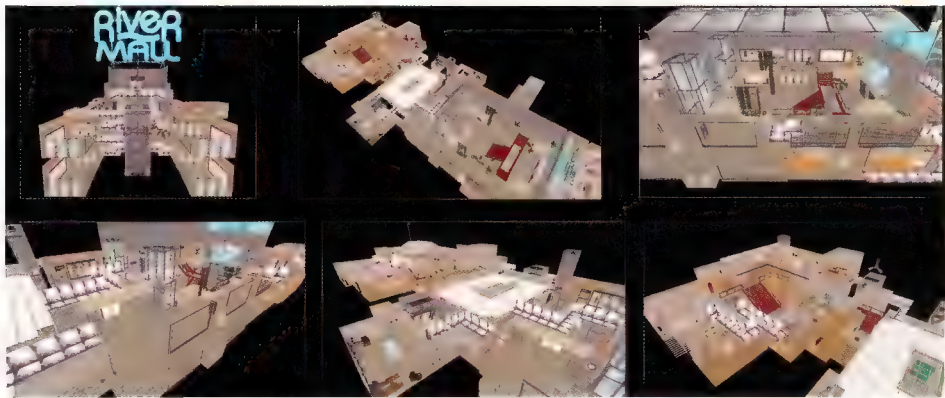


■ That beautiful waterfall can be entered by sneaky spies looking to hide.

in, and still more hacks (to disable cameras and a security curtain), the hi-fi area is difficult to cover for a single mercenary, though it is possible.

Cameras are most certainly a thorn in the side of spies in this section of the level, but the ND133 can be reached via air ducts, above the ceiling, or straight through.

■ **BELIEVE THE HYPE:** This is the best map of all *Pandora Tomorrow* maps, bar none. Both of these maps can add a couple dozen new hours – each – to the total time you'll spend playing *Pandora Tomorrow* multiplayer. That makes the five dollars spent for them very easy to justify. Download and enjoy.



■ This 3D layout gives you a good idea of just how big "River Mall" is.

PREMIUM DOWNLOADS

MechAssault

This giant action Mech game almost overflows with free goodies, but once again, Microsoft found a way to boost the game even further with a cool premium download. The Objective Package adds two gameplay modes – the outpost battle Check It and the base assault Take It – and adds three eight-player maps on which to play them:

SECRET OUTPOST

This one's got it all – man vs. his fellow man on Xbox Live, man vs. machine (in the form of the hulking mechs, of course – not your Xbox itself), and man vs. nature, thanks to the frozen wastelands, treacherous cliffs, ice bridges, and constant near-whiteout conditions. Being snowblind has never been so enjoyable

MAGMA FIELDS

If it ain't blistering snow, it's blistering lava. This level is filled with constant volcanic activity, so you'll either have to watch your step or wind up with the worst hotfoot ever

CITY UNDER SIEGE

Whatever happened in this city, it was bad. There's a big, watery crater in the middle of this circular level – and now there are mechs fighting in it, too



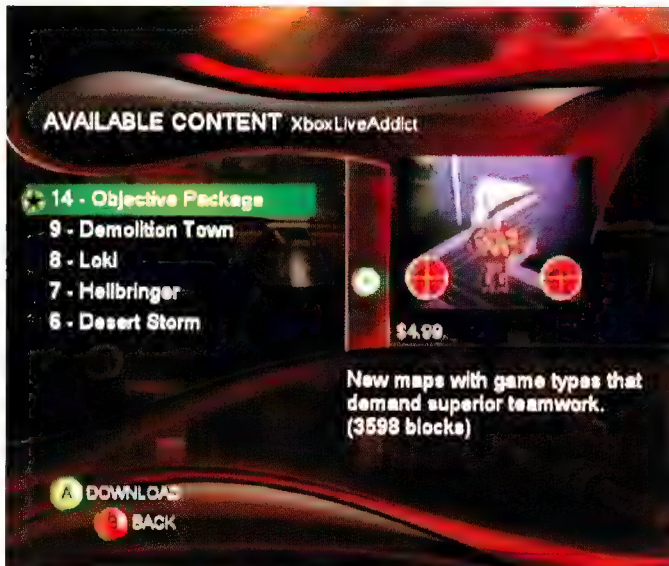
Long Beach Dodge RAM SRT-10



Long Beach Ferrari 612 Scaglietti



Long Beach Subaru Impreza 22B STI



The Objective Package offers three maps and two modes for five bucks.

Project Gotham Racing 2

You've mastered the cars and you've mastered the tracks...but the checkered flag hasn't even come close to dropping on *PGR2*. Three extra packs have been released – one with Paris tracks, one with Paris cars, and one offering both for Long Beach. Each pack is \$4.99, but all told, it's 16 new vehicles (including rare Ferraris, a high-end Corvette, and a Dodge Hemi) and 15 new courses. Clearly, you get more for your money with Long Beach, but it's all good content

LONG BEACH

LONG BEACH TRACKS

- LONG BEACH CHALLENGE
- RAINBOW LAGOON
- COASTAL RUN
- DOLPHIN LOOP
- LBC (LONG BEACH CITY)
- AQUARIUM
- CC CIRCULAR
- OCEAN BOULEVARD

LONG BEACH CARS

- PORSCHE 911 GT2 CLUBSPORT
- SUBARU IMPREZA 22B STI
- VOLKSWAGEN NARDO
- FERRARI 612 SCAGLIETTI
- DODGE CHALLENGER R/T HEMI
- DODGE RAM SRT-10
- ARIEL ATOM 2
- RADICAL SR3 TURBO

PARIS

PARIS TRACKS

- LE CIRCUIT COMPLET
- LES DEUX PONTS
- ELYSEES CHALLENGE
- LES MONUMENTS CELEBRES
- L'ARC DE TRIOMPHE
- AVENUE D'ILENA
- CIRCUIT INTERIEUR

PARIS CARS

- TVR CERBERA SPEED 12 (in British Racing Green)
- BMW M3 CSL
- BMW 645CI
- CHEVROLET CORVETTE C6 Z51
- FERRARI 250 TR
- FERRARI 288 GTO
- FERRARI 365 GTS 4
- PORSCHE 356 CARRERA SPEEDSTER

Knowledge of the map is key to victory in any game, but especially when things get tactical like in *Black Arrow*.

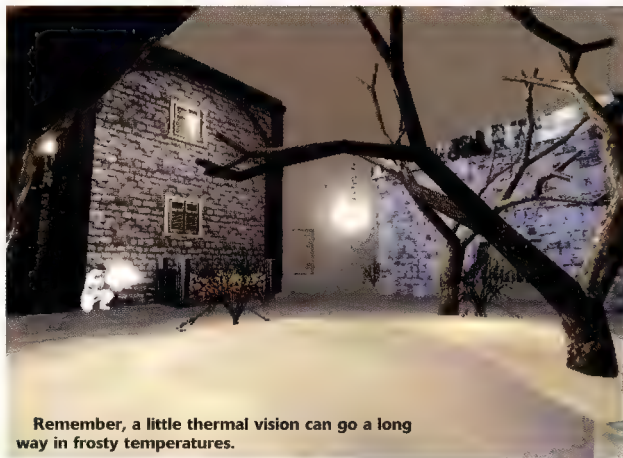


Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow

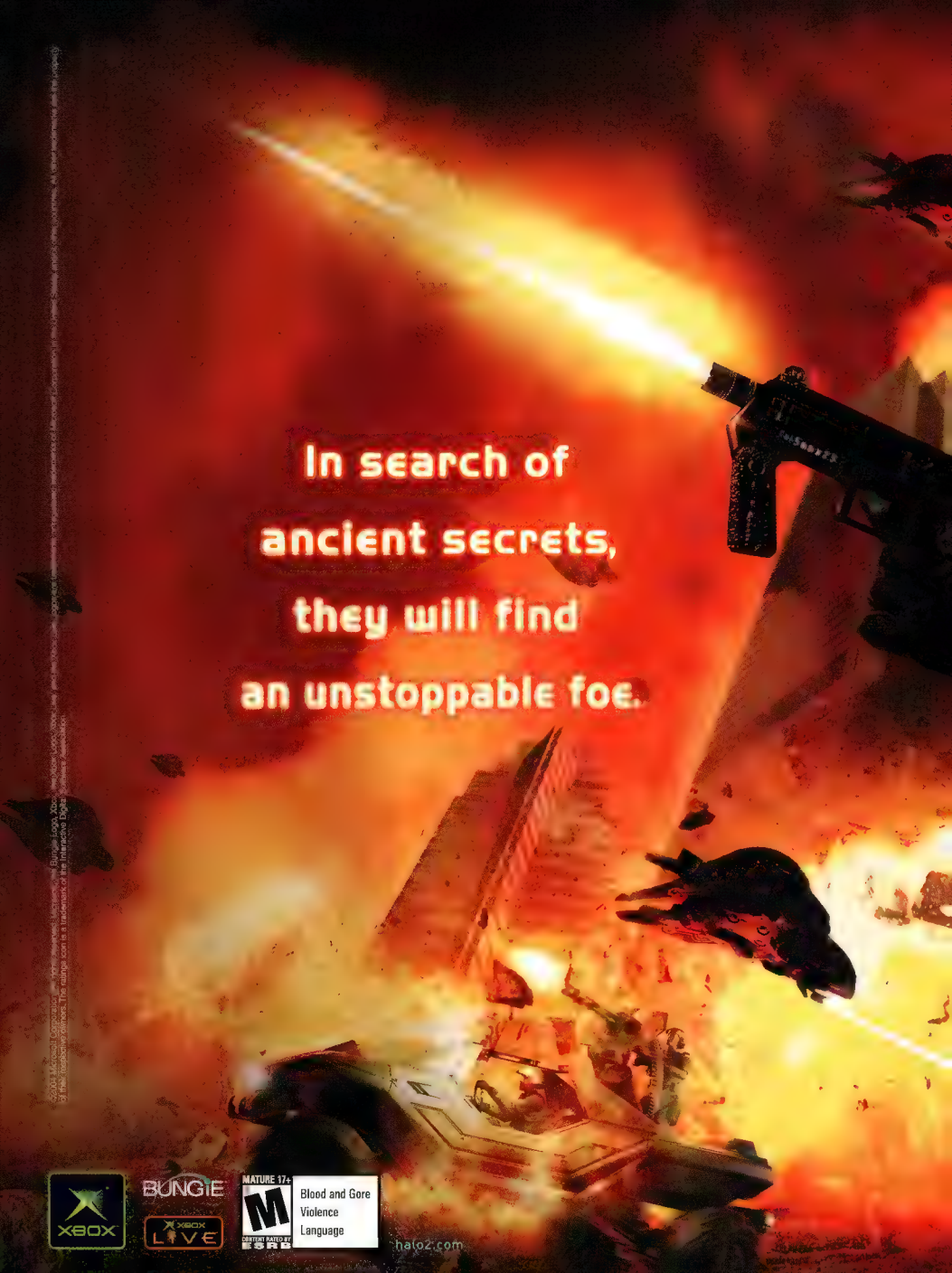
Now this is what we're talking about for five smackeroos. Not one, two, or even three, but four new multiplayer maps. Ubisoft has a long track record of treating its fan base with as much love and loyalty as the community shows the company, and the Assault Pack #1 is just another example of that.

Like the *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* maps before it, the levels offered in this download are of the highest quality; they were definitely not resurrected from the cutting-room floor. The four maps are "Winterlodge," "Office 2," "Petroleum," and "Killhouse." The first is fun for the Sharpshooter Mode crowd, the second is heaven for close-quarters-combat players, the third seems destined to be a great clan-versus-clan battleground, and the fourth's distant windows make it a sniper's paradise.

This game has consistently been the most popular Xbox Live game since it came out (excluding *Halo 2*, of course), and the consistent refreshing of the map roster goes a long way toward keeping it at the top. Oh, and if you need the pot sweetened further, another level, "Village," was also released recently, free of charge.



Remember, a little thermal vision can go a long way in frosty temperatures.



In search of
ancient secrets,
they will find
an unstoppable foe.

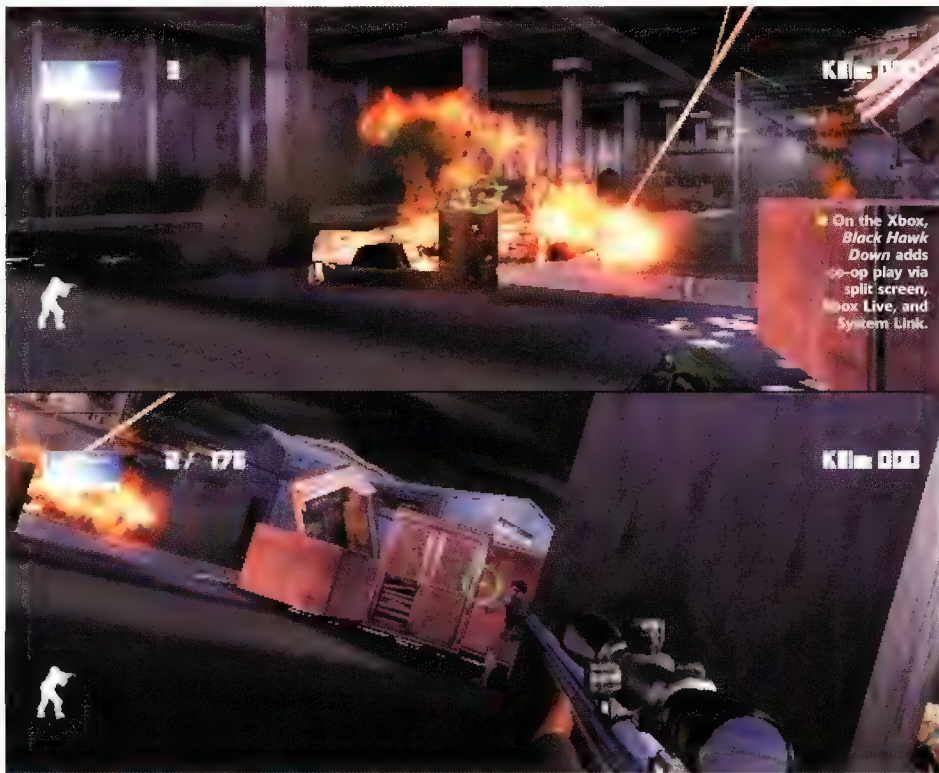


Blood and Gore
Violence
Language

halo2.com



Earth Will Never Be The Same



Delta Force: Black Hawk Down

No one gets left behind – or left out

PUBLISHER **NOVALOGIC** | DEVELOPER **CLIMAX STUDIOS** | PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-32 CONFIRMED, 2-50 LIKELY**
EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, LEADERBOARDS, STAT TRACKING**

What springs to mind when you recall the Mogadishu mission popularized in the movie *Black Hawk Down*? A good portion of you probably chimed in with "superior numbers" or a recollection of the vast throngs faced by the Rangers and Delta Force in that withering 16-hour firefight in 1993.

In real life, that's an utterly bleak prospect, but in a fictional gaming world, it's the recipe for exciting multiplayer gameplay that NovaLogic hopes to capture in the first Xbox game to offer

50-player action on Xbox Live. (At press time, the company could only guarantee 32-player matches, but it was testing 50-player in simulations.)

Numbers like that might be more common on the PC circuit, but on Xbox Live, they're unheard of – the maximum achieved by current Live stars like *Halo 2* is 16 players.

So as with the PC original, the multiplayer component should rule the roost, and NovaLogic seems to be taking the time to do right by the game, tweaking this Xbox port significantly over

the course of an additional year of development to make strides in both the single- and multiplayer gameplay.

The Men Next to You

The sexiest new feature of *Black Hawk Down* for the Xbox is co-op play. You'll be able to team up to tackle the single-player missions in a variety of ways: four players on a split screen, via System Link, or on Xbox Live. As with the deathmatches, NovaLogic is currently striving to bump up the



numbers for System Link and Xbox Live co-op to eight players, but four is a lock.

Across the board in multiplayer, you'll always play as Delta Force commandos no matter which side you're on, and the enemy will always look like Somalian mercenary forces. "Delta had a real problem with the idea of Delta clashing," explains Joel Taubel, producer at Novalogic, so his team ensured that would never happen by making the enemy always look like mercenaries even when both sides are playing as Deltas.

The multiplayer action will be impressively robust, too. The list of game modes includes team deathmatch, capture the flag, flagball, attack & defend, search & destroy, team king of the hill, and more. All of the single-player weapons, from the CAR15 to the M203, will report for duty, and you'll choose from four character classes: medic, gunner, sniper, and close-quarters battle.

100 Caskets by Morning

Novalogic is "tailor-making six new maps," Taubel reports, that are more console-focused and include heated close-quarters battles, while the rest of the map roster is beefed up by redesigned ports of the PC maps. One of the new maps is set in a harbor where you traverse docks and boat decks loaded with cargo crates. The water's not just for decoration, though; you can swim under the docks or enter one of the boats through a hole in its hull. Other new locations include the Olympic Hotel, a military compound, and a firefight staged in a shantytown with plenty of elevation changes.

Black Hawk Down's arsenal of Live goodies will keep the map line-up fresh as Novalogic plans to offer new turf as downloadable content after the game is released. Other Live extras



■ Although you as play as Deltas, enemies always appear as mercenaries.

Games of Live: Black Hawk Down



include leaderboards, stat tracking, medals, and best of all, squad-based tournaments

Even would-be cheaters won't escape unscathed. "Black Hawk Down has its own internal certification," says Taubel. "If you jump in with edits to the game's code, we'll immediately punt you and ban you. We've had 18 months of cheaters hitting our system on the PC, so we're up on what they'll do."

All Units, Irene. I Say Again, Irene.

On the single-player side, the PC version faced heavy – and deserved – criticism for its shoddy AI. With *Black Hawk Down* for Xbox, Taubel promises that "we've learned our lesson," and friendlies will now pick their targets better and won't get stuck in corners or run into one other. "A lot of our silly AI moments were resolved by better target prioritization," he adds.

The missions are also getting a tune-up, softening up some of the frustrating moments and occasionally adding in enemies so there's always something to do. A new training level will help newbies get a feel for the weaponry and for the leaning and crouching moves. The single-player missions are otherwise ported over from the PC

Games of Live: Black Hawk Down



game, including the popular Irene mission that begins with you skimming over the ocean outside Mogadishu, heating up as you try to rappel on to the hotel roof with RPG rounds searing the air around you.


Wisely, NovaLogic is paying a lot of attention to converting the mouse-based aiming to a controller. "It's not lock/fire/forget," Taubel says, "but it's easier. We're using a system like *Halo's* that slows over the target and slowly pulls the reticule in without giving you a 100 percent lock."

Nobody Asks To Be a Hero

What will be a lock, though, is the attention that *Black Hawk Down* is bound to command. Just imagine the mayhem of 32 or perhaps even 50 players squaring off across a map on Xbox Live. NovaLogic is confident that lag won't be an issue — it's testing the gameplay on connections between its L.A. and London offices, and promises to open up new servers as needed. If the team behind the game actually pulls all this off, Live might have a new ace on the block, gradually lining up the Master Chief in its sights.




PRIME TIME


XBOX

November 10 | United States


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Prime Time

For all the latest activities, promotions, and special events, be sure to check out www.xbox.com/primetime

PARTY PHOTOS
 Everyone knows Xbox Live is better when you've got a bunch of buddies together. So invite your friends over for a night of Xbox Live gaming, and make sure you've got a camera handy and snap some photos of your event. What then? Send them to xlmail@microsoft.com along with details of the party, where it was held, and who was attending.



When's the party? Every night for the rest of your life.

Xbox Live is intended to be more than just a simple matchmaking service. Community lies at the heart of a successful online gaming portal. And if you want to build community, you've got to assemble it around events. So, Microsoft didn't screw around – there's an event every single day on Xbox Live, sometimes two or three...and that doesn't count any that players might choose to organize on their own.

While finding people to play your favorite

games is easy enough on Xbox Live by using both OptiMatch and QuickMatch, Prime Time programming gives everything a little more structure, enticing like-minded gamers along to play your favorite games on a particular night. Every night, The Powers That Be choose one or two games on a particular theme; all you have to do is grab your copy, load up, and sign in to find fresh opponents – or maybe renew old rivalries. Most nights feature two games, one at

9pm Eastern/6pm Pacific and another at 11pm Eastern/8pm Pacific. And just by stopping by for Prime Time nights, you have the chance to win prizes, meet new people, make new friends, and either find challenging new opponents or more casual buddies to hang out with and play for fun.

So whatever your favorite kind of game, check out the listings below, and pay a visit to Xbox Live on one of these nights to find like-minded members ready to play.

MONDAY: REST & RELAXATION NIGHT

Every Monday, you'll find ample proof that the old maxim is true. It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game. Rest & Relaxation Night is the time to log on with any of your favorite games, be they family style (such as *Trivial Pursuit: Unhinged* and both volumes of *Dance Dance Revolution Ultramix*) or more combative (*Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow* and *Dead Or Alive Ultimate* have both been featured), and just chill. Whatever the hot games of the night may be, the competition is relaxed, egos and scoreboards are checked at the door, and the games are played in the sportsmanlike spirit.

This is the night to get on Xbox Live if you want to add new friends to your list, and get tips, advice and pointers from expert players who also turn up to help out members of all ability levels.



TUESDAY: OLD-SCHOOL NIGHT

Okay, so you had to spend your money on stupid crap like rent and food instead of new games. It happens – but you're not out of the loop just because your collection veers toward the Xbox classics. If you haven't added to your game collection for a while, you can be sure to find members playing your old-school favorite games on Tuesday nights. With the growing number of Xbox Live-enabled Platinum Hits titles, this is one of the most accessible nights of the week.

Games like *Ghost Recon* and its expansion *Island Thunder* remain hugely popular on Tuesdays, as does *Return to Castle Wolfenstein: Tides of War*. Long-standing Xbox Live favorite *MechAssault* has enjoyed consistent updates with free downloadable content that adds new Mechs, new game modes, and new maps, keeping it fresh and popular long after its initial release. Better still, if you've been playing these games for a while, so has everyone else, making Tuesday a great night to put your advanced strategies into play



WEDNESDAY: RACE TO THE WEEKEND

The weekend is appearing on the horizon, and you've got the opportunity to put your foot down and make it there with squealing tires and nitro boosts. Race to the Weekend celebrates the best in Xbox Live racing games.

Huge hits like *RalliSport Challenge 2*, *OutRun 2*, *Burnout 3: Takedown*, *Project Gotham Racing 2*, and others bring their own unique blend of road, track, and off-road racing online, and you'll meet, greet, and race against other members of all abilities. Newcomers like *Need for Speed Underground 2* and *Forza Motorsport* will only keep Wednesday nights revving high.



THURSDAY: NEW RELEASE NIGHT

Whatever game is new on the shelves is being played on Xbox Live on Thursday's New Release Night. It's the sole night of the week where just one game gets the spotlight – after all, everybody likes to play with their newest toys, right? After you've just plunked down hard-earned cash for that new game, you want to be sure that other members are online and playing. This is the night that guarantees you action and camaraderie with all the hottest hits.

Don't be surprised if you find some overlooked gems here, too – after all, lots of games come out in the fall and around the holidays, so you might see a few titles get a second chance at making a first impression on a Thursday night.

PRIME TIME continued



FRIDAY: FREE-FOR-ALL FRIDAY

As the name implies, you'd better be ready for anything on Friday nights—anything goes. One session you might be slugging it out in a gridiron battle, the next you could be fending off alien attackers, or carrying out covert operations. Free-For-All Friday takes everything that's good about the Xbox Live library and serves it up all at once. And with a Live-compatible library that's approaching a stunning 150 titles, that's an insane amount of variety to explore.

In the span of a single month, Free-For-All Friday played host to *Mortal Kombat: Deception*, *Madden NFL 2005*, *Dead or Alive Ultimate*, *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow*, *Fight Club*, *GoldenEye: Rogue Agent*, *NCAA Football*, and, of course, *Halo 2*. What will next Friday hold? Your guess is as good as anyone's—sign in and find out.



SATURDAY: SHOOTER SATURDAY

Saturday night's alright for fighting! After a long week, what better way to unwind than jumping on to Xbox Live? *Halo 2* is a no-brainer, but it's just the jewel in the crown of an embarrassment of Xbox riches. Everything from the sci-fi realms of *Unreal Championship* and *Star Wars Battlefront* to the gritty realism of *Call of Duty: Finest Hour* and *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow* is fair game on Saturday. And thanks to newer games like the aforementioned *Black Arrow* and *Halo 2*, expect to see Saturday-night user-created tournaments as a frequent occurrence as well.

With your Xbox Live Communicator offering the chance to talk smack to teammates, the party rages on a Saturday night that's all-out action all the way. It's the night to celebrate the weekend and put the work week behind you in a thoroughly entertaining, adrenaline-charged night of fun and fraggin'.



SUNDAY: SPORTS SUNDAY

It's Sunday—of course it's sports. Are you ready for some football? If so, American or European? What about back-to-back basketball matchups, or an afternoon on the golf course? Xbox Live is the place to put your competitive spirit to the test or just indulge in a friendly match to gauge your skills. Every Sunday you can leverage the full power of the entire EA and ESPN sports libraries, as well as Microsoft's own hits, like the incredibly addictive and satisfying *Top Spin*. Believe it or not, more than 40 Xbox sports games feature support for Live—the choice may be overwhelming, but the choice is also completely yours. Now get in there and win one for the team.



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MUSIC VIDEO
MUSIC VIDEO

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MUSIC VIDEO

MPAA
MUSIC VIDEO
MUSIC VIDEO

PRIME TIME *continued*



Game With Fame

Everybody plays Xbox Live, from the folks down the street to the folks on TV. Loads of celebrities who hooked on Xbox Live, and Game With Fame is your chance to pit your skills against theirs.

At least once a month, celebrities come to play, and since video games and tour buses are a natural combination, you'll find a wide variety of musical artists signing in to say "yo." Past

Game With Fame guests have included Outkast, Hoobastank (above), Joint Chiefs, Jimmy Eat World, The Strokes, Method Man, Korn, New Found Glory (twice), Maroon 5, Everlast, and Yellowcard, just to name a very few. But not every GWF guest makes music – actress Michelle Rodriguez (*The Fast and the Furious*) took on gamers in *Project Gotham Racing 2* during her guest shot, and NASCAR driver Elliot Sadler

showed Xbox Live gamers exactly how the pros do it.

What's more, as the Game With Fame program evolves, so do the prizes. Not only could you get to chat and game with celebrities, but you might score some freebies – albums, concert tickets, who knows? Look out for the special contests by checking www.xbox.com/live and click on the Game With Fame link under Events.

Who Is the Mystery Gamer?



Their identities are hidden, their skills are unknown, their appearance is unexpected – they are the Mystery Gamers (in reality, a member of the Xbox Live team at Microsoft), and they could make you a winner. When you join a game, look for the Gamertag Xbox Live in the player list – that's the Mystery Gamer! If you can beat them, you'll win a limited-edition T-shirt (off the record, anyway – amusingly, this is not an official Microsoft contest, but rather something thrown together for fun by the magic elves that keep Live running). But remember, they're on their home turf and they picked the game – you're going to have to earn it. Watch your Xbox Live main menu for announcements of when and what the Mystery Gamer will be playing.



Think you have what it takes to meet and beat your heroes? Check out some of the reactions from Xbox Live gamers who found themselves head to head in a Game With Fame.

OUTCAST

ESPN NFL FOOTBALL 2K4

"Big Boi and Andre 3000 are my idols. I have been a fan since 1994, so getting an opportunity to play with Big Boi is like a dream come true. It was something that I will remember for the rest of my life. I played Big Boi! It was the best experience I've had playing on Xbox Live. He was really cool."

— PUSHA C, ATLANTA, GA.



ELLIOT SADLER

NASCAR 2005: CHASE FOR THE CUP

"Racin' with a NASCAR driver was awesome. It's not like he just showed up and raced and didn't talk. He was laughin', jokin', havin' a good ol' time. If you were faster, he would say go low and let you pass him. He was cool and nice, asking people where they're from and how old they are. I was a little faster than him, and I was behind him, but him being Elliot Sadler, I didn't want to try to pass him and wreck him because I would've have felt really bad about it 'cause he's such a cool guy. I got all three of my races on tape, and the third race, I made it where the voices came through the TV, so it would record him talking. This was an experience that I will never forget. Thanks, Elliot, for the good times!"

— SUMMDOGGS, CHESTERFIELD, VA



THE STROKES

TOP SPIN

"I got beat by The Strokes guitarist Albert Hammond Jr. on *Top Spin*. During the game, we managed to have a pretty good conversation with hardly any delay, excellent considering the distances involved. As well as having great taste in music, it turns out we share a dislike for The Darkness...! AJ's skill at tennis was pretty remarkable; he managed to take the set, leaving me with only one game to my name despite my diving forehands! This certainly is a night I won't forget; I'm glad I signed up!"

— KIZERON, CARDIFF, SOUTH WALES, UNITED KINGDOM



NEW FOUND GLORY

COUNTER-STRIKE; TOP SPIN; RAINBOW SIX 3

"Man, I came so close to beating New Found Glory! It would be great to keep this going so I can go to a concert and be like, 'Hey, remember me? I beat you on Xbox Live!' and then run away fast."

— NFGMOVIESTAR, HOUSTON, TX



MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ

PROJECT GOTHAM RACING 2

"Just finished up racing with Michelle on *Project Gotham Racing 2*. Myself and six other gamers were lucky enough to get into the first race with her. Michelle was great, funny, and a blast to play with. A big thanks to her for showing up. It was cool meeting her and chatting it up for a few laps...even though she rear-ended me into Turn Three."

— AYU, HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, CANADA



YELLOWCARD

ESPN NFL 2K5

"I played them, and it was an amazing game. During the first kickoff, they were able to scramble to about the 50 yard line, so I knew that it was going to be a tough game, but I was still very confident that I was going to win. They were mostly into using long passes, and this was a big mistake because I just used a zone blitz and stopped them. I had about 14 sacks and 3 interceptions. We played through the second half, and it was a close battle up until the last 35 seconds. At this point, the score was 14-20. They had the lead. I used a halfback toss and motioned my fullback to stand behind the tight end. This worked amazingly well, and I got the 32 yards needed to score the touchdown. Now the score was 20-20, and there was no time left on the clock, so basically, if I missed the field goal, I would have to go into overtime and potentially throw away the game. I made the field goal and won the game. The game that I played that night was one of the most exciting games I had ever played on Xbox Live."

— SOKOOL, SCARSDALE, NY



■ See the big Mech? You might want to run away from it.

MechAssault 2: Lone Wolf

So huge it's almost massively multiplayer

PUBLISHER MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS | DEVELOPER DAY 1 STUDIOS | PLAYERS ON LIVE 2-8
EXTRAS DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, CONQUEST MODE, CLANS



■ Pilot me!

Quick, name the game that's pushing Xbox Live further than it's ever gone. If you answered *Halo 2*, you're mistaken. Sure, The Next Big Thing has enlivened Xbox Live, but Bungie appears to be making up its own rules as it goes. The *MechAssault* franchise, on the other hand, was the original killer app for

Xbox Live, and those developers have been leading the Live charge ever since. After closely monitoring and interacting with the dedicated Live community in the months since *MechAssault's* release, the developers at Day 1 Studios have incorporated more of the service's flashy new features than you can possibly imagine into their huge sequel, *MechAssault 2: Lone Wolf*.

In case you've forgotten, *MechAssault 2* is set in the 31st century – a short time after the original title – amidst rampant clan warfare. Not content to churn out a lazy sequel with some new mechs and new levels, Day 1 is making this a *MechWarrior* game that

Games of Live: MechAssault 2



■ BattleArmor can hitch rides on VTOLs and kick some serious enemy butt



■ Do not underestimate your new BattleArmor. It's powerful and versatile.

only the power of the Xbox and Xbox Live can make possible

Featuring no fewer than five methods of transportation, teamplay promises to be fun and a requirement if you want to claim victory for your crew

Move on foot and plant proximity mines near buildings or enemy emplacements. Use your BattleArmor to scale buildings, hijack Mechs, and ride along on VTOLs and friendly Mechs. Commandeer a tank and pound Mechs under cover of your null-sig invisibility technology. Pilot a VTOL jet to carry tanks or BattleArmor into battle and drop health and weapon power-ups to your teammates. And, of course, you can climb into one of the 100-ton Mechs and lay waste to everything in your path.

The sheer variety of



■ Of course, causing large-scale mayhem and destruction is a big part of the game



New Mechs?
Of course!



■ You'll be able to form your own clans, complete with your own names and logos.

Games of Live: MechAssault 2



There aren't many games on Live that are prettier than this.



Approach enemy Mechs and try to hijack them.



It's not your handiwork, not for too long.

multiplayer gameplay in *Lone Wolf* lends itself perfectly to organized teamplay, which will be officially supported in the form of Xbox Live clans. Anyone can make a clan, and up to 100 people can join it. They function exactly how you've already seen and experienced in *Halo 2* and *Rainbow Six 3: Black Arrow*. You will, of course, be able to challenge other clans for bragging rights, but there's a bigger objective at stake...planet control. Yes, entire planets.

When you first create your character, you'll select a "house" to join (there are around four at the moment). You can operate many clans within a house, but your house starts with and will always have a home planet, and your actions and results on Xbox Live will help determine just how far across the galaxy your house's empire expands.

Winning battles earns you house points, and those points can be used to buy planets. You can only attack a planet directly adjacent to one your house controls, so your reign will, in effect, slowly spread across space like a blanket. And when you log off, the battles continue to wage on Xbox Live, so if you don't play for a while, your house can go from owning the galaxy to begging for asteroids.

The whole thing is currently codenamed Conquest Mode, but that moniker is likely to change before the game ships at the end of December. It's not quite massively multiplayer as you're still only playing with 11 other people at a time. But the semi-persistent nature of *MechAssault 2*'s online war is a guaranteed hit, and we can't wait to enlist.

Expect more Mechs via Xbox Live Content Download.



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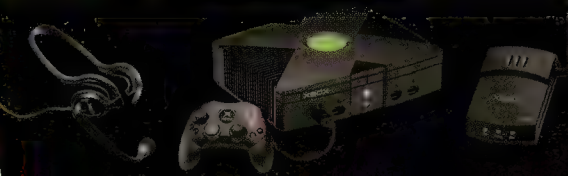


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Clancy's Classics



Helping to build the foundation of Xbox Live

Aside from the fantastic *MechAssault*, no game has done more to build Xbox Live into the million-member mammoth it is today than the *Tom Clancy* line of military-action games. In different ways, *Ghost Recon* (and its standalone expansion, *Island Thunder*), *Rainbow Six 3*, *Splinter Cell*, and *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* have been integral in turning Live into a runaway success.

So whether you're new to Xbox Live or are a veteran who, for one reason or another, has missed one or more of these games, take a look at why it's not too late to find out what they're all about. Each still sports a vibrant, thriving online community, and they're just waiting for you to join in.

■ Ricketty shacks are like clown cars, only they're packed with gun-toting terrorists.



■ Someone forgot to tell the sniper that this is an urban mission.



Tom Clancy's Ghost Recon

PUBLISHER UBISOFT | DEVELOPER RED STORM | PLAYERS ON LIVE 2-16

When it was originally released on the PC, *Ghost Recon* was a critically acclaimed spin-off of the *Rainbow Six* series. Taking the fight outside into vast forests and treacherous mountains, gamers took to the quiet, one-shot one-kill cat-and-mouse game quite well – it was a critical rather than commercial success.

But when it came to Xbox as a Live launch title in November 2002, it transformed into something else. It ascended, as if it had found its true calling. What was a perfectly solid multiplayer game on the PC became a classic on Xbox Live. The reason? It has a lot to do with the level playing field. Everyone on Live is using the same console with a similar high-speed Internet connection. More than that, however, is one of Xbox Live's other universal features: the awesome voice communication.

Without a doubt, *Ghost Recon* was more suited to the use of coordinated strategies and attacks than any of the other early Live titles, and the service's standard headset and microphone made this a breeze. By pushing and holding down the White button, walkie-talkie style, you could clearly and quickly communicate exactly what you wanted to your teammates. No fumbling on a keyboard while trying to type your thoughts like on the PC version.

And though the voice was key, the game

itself had to be fun too. With a ton of gameplay modes, such as cooperative play through the story campaign, plus adversarial modes like Last Man Standing (self-explanatory), Hamburger Hill (think of it as capture and hold), and more, the huge outdoor regions in *Ghost Recon* proved to be a breath of fresh air for gamers, and the

game quickly became an instant Live classic. It's now available for just \$19.99, making it a low-risk, high-yield investment. Oh, and the standalone expansion pack, *Island Thunder*, which added an eight level campaign mode (also fully playable online in co-op) and a bevy of new multiplayer maps, is also now just 20 bucks. **XBOX**





Tom Clancy's Rainbow Six 3

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** DEVELOPER **UBISOFT MONTREAL** PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-16**
EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, LEADERBOARDS**

Bringing the battle indoors, *Rainbow Six 3* takes the elite training of the Ghosts into close-quarters combat. You are, as in every Clancy offering, hunting terrorists in a near-future secret war, and here you'll have to keep from soiling yourself when your enemy comes bursting through the door next to you. It's that intense, online and off.

Team play is critical to your success, and a number of new toys have been added to your arsenal, including thermal vision (which even lets you see through thin walls and doors!), smoke grenades (throw them through

windows!), and flashbangs (blind your foes!). New gameplay elements, such as "cloth physics" that enable a grenade to get caught in a hanging sheet, further enhance the tension of gameplay, though you might not think so the first time you blow yourself up because of it...

Like *Ghost Recon*, the wealth of multiplayer options is astounding. Enjoy four-player cooperative play through the whole single-player campaign when online, tons of adversarial modes, and of course Downloadable Content.

Wielding the Clancy magic touch, *Rainbow Six 3* immediately vaulted to the top of the

Xbox Live charts upon its release, maintaining a firm grip on the title of most played Live game. Like *Ghost Recon*, its success spawned a standalone, multiplayer-centric expansion, this one titled *Black Arrow*. It packs a ten-mission single player storyline (playable cooperatively on Live, of course), and a truckload more maps. Plus, additional freebies are available via downloadable content, and a premium package, Assault Pack #1, is now ready for purchase for just \$4.99 and contains four sweet new levels.



Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell

PUBLISHER UBISOFT DEVELOPER UBISOFT MONTREAL PLAYERS ON LIVE N/A
EXTRAS DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT

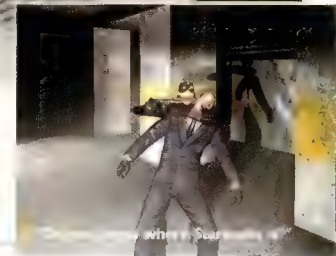
Though it's not multiplayer (see page 40 for the online version of *Splinter Cell*), the original stealthy spy classic *Splinter Cell* was the first game to roll out substantial single-player downloadable content on Xbox Live. The first content package, "Kola Cell," was a full single-player mission, available for free just a couple of months after the game came out in November 2002. Two more missions, "Vselka Submarine Part 1" and "Vselka Submarine Part 2" followed suit, and the completely free-of-charge trio of downloads expanded the overall campaign by a full third.

Think about that for a second. Thirty-three percent more *Splinter Cell* became available to Xbox Live members. What was once a nine-

mission adventure became — at no cost to the millions of Xbox gamers that purchased the game — a 12-level techno thriller, courtesy of Xbox Live.

The first mission, "Kola Cell," tasks reluctant hero Sam Fisher, and thus you the player, with assassinating Phillip Masse, a programmer with a penchant for helping the bad guys. It's a technically beautiful area with all of the *Splinter Cell* bells and whistles out in full force, such as the flowing curtains, dynamic shadows, and tricked-out lighting effects. There are multiple paths through the level, allowing for a fair bit of replayability. It's every bit as cool as any of the missions in the core game.

The two-part "Vselka Submarine" quest again



ups the quality quotient with Fisher having to infiltrate an enemy submarine and disable it. You must first get to the sub, though, and that's what Part 1 covers. Part 2 takes place entirely onboard the vessel. Multiple solutions to a single problem are again a dominant design edict, and ultimately you benefit.

Though it doesn't offer traditional multiplayer, the outstanding downloadable content in *Splinter Cell* put the spotlight on this universal Xbox Live feature and certainly helped push the service forward. Consider this: Can you think of an Xbox Live game that doesn't offer Downloadable Content now?



Tom Clancy's

Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow

PUBLISHER UBISOFT | DEVELOPER UBISOFT MONTREAL | PLAYERS ON LIVE 2-4
EXTRAS DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, LEADERBOARDS

To date – though the upcoming third installment in the franchise, *Chaos Theory*, will have something to say about it – there is no Xbox Live experience quite like *Pandora Tomorrow*. How do you take a game like *Splinter Cell* with gameplay that's dependent on shadows and remaining undetected, and turn it into a fun multiplayer mode?

The developers at Ubisoft Shanghai clearly found the right answer to that question.

Each side is split into two teams of two: spies and mercenaries. The former's objective is to infiltrate an area, reach a select number of stationary ND133 virus canisters, and disable them. Of course, that's just one gameplay mode: neutralization. The other two are extraction, where the spies must steal the ND133 and

exit the area safely, and sabotage, where the black-clad techno-ninjas attempt to use a wall mountable modem to neutralize the virus containers.

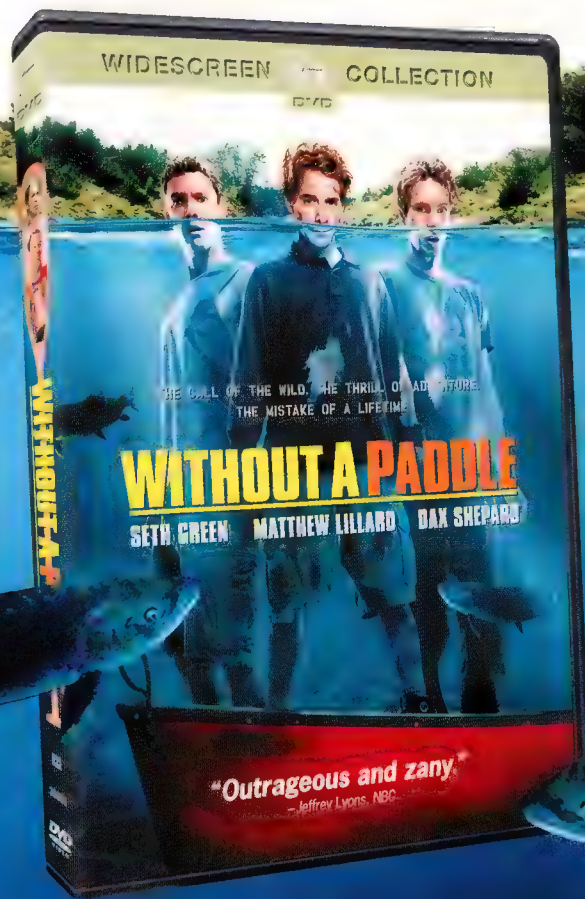
Each side plays radically differently. Spies play exactly like the single-player hero Sam Fisher; they're agile, quick, able to hide just about anywhere, and the view is from the third-person. Unlike Fisher, though, they're non lethal (mostly). Their only weapon is a taser rifle that can temporarily stun the opposition. The spies can, however, sneak up behind a merc, grab him by the neck, and vocally taunt him before either knocking him out with their elbow or snapping his neck and killing him. The best spies, however, go unseen and undetected.

The mercenaries are armed to the teeth.

Shouldering an automatic rifle, they are also heavily armored. They can pack a number of gadgets, including proximity or laser-trip explosive mines, motion-detector vision, and electromagnetic vision, that lets the merc see anything using power (including a spy with his night- or thermal-vision modes activated). The spies, however, can counter with gadgets of their own, including the aforementioned vision modes; a spy bullet that, when shot at a merc, lets the spies intercept the mercenaries' voice communications in real time; and smoke and flashbang grenades.

The end result of this radical new multiplayer creation is a thrilling game of cat and mouse that is unlike anything you've ever played before.

THREE GUYS. ONE MAP. NO CLUE.



SPECIAL FEATURES:

- Commentaries by the cast and director
- 13 Additional Scenes
- Theatrical Trailer
- 6 MTV Interstitials

Murphy's Law Comes Home on DVD Jan. 11th.

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PG-13

FOR BRIEF CONTENT, SOME MATERIAL MAY BE OFFENSIVE TO SOME CHILDREN

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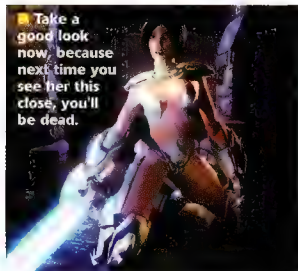
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Date, art, availability and DVD special features subject to change without notice.



■ One pull of the trigger, and in the *Unreal* world, six rockets can go screaming toward their target.

Unreal Championship 2: The Liandri Conflict

Welcome to the reality-TV event of the far future!



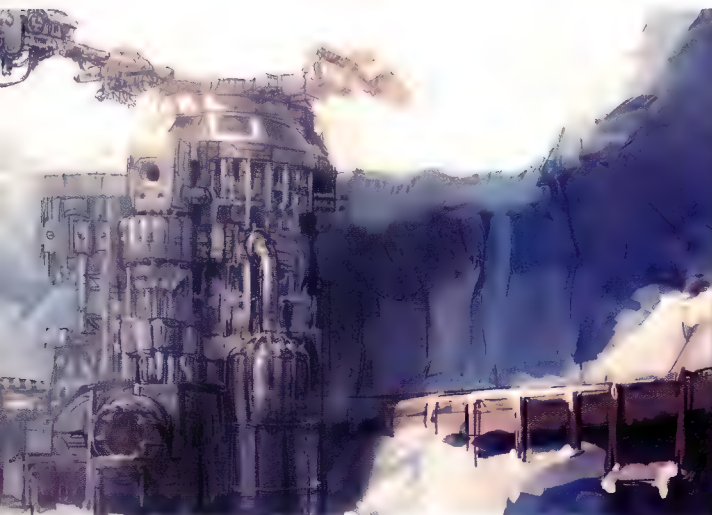
■ Take a good look now, because next time you see her this close, you'll be dead.

PUBLISHER **MIDWAY GAMES** DEVELOPER **EPIC GAMES** PLAYERS ON XBOX LIVE **2-16**
RELEASE DATE **MARCH 2005** EXTRAS **TBD**

What seems like an eon ago, Microsoft demoed fully playable, fully functioning multiplayer *Unreal Championship 2* code at a press event. While the roster of playable combatants was clearly still in development, the available pugilists moved with incredible speed and a surprising amount of grace around a spectacularly detailed arena. The delivery of each bullet, rocket, or melee attack was matched by an almost balletic elegance as the characters skipped, danced, and dodged what were, when you get down to it, vicious deadly assaults!

If *Unreal Championship 2* was glossy, playable, and thoroughly entertaining way back then, just how silky smooth will the action be when it finally ships under the flag of new owner and publisher, Midway? We expect great things, and we expect not to be disappointed.

For sheer firepower, *UC2* is a completely different online gaming experience than other similarly themed action games. Its action will be faster paced, more blindingly colorful, and arguably more visceral than *Halo 2*'s (though without the exhaustive quantity of game modes



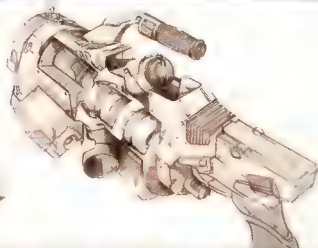
■ Levels are being designed for both ranged battles and up-close-and-personal melee combat.

and vehicles). That's why it's a perfect complement to the current, quality stable of Live-enabled action games on the market.

Over Xbox Live you'll be able to compete in 16-player firefights that cover the usual game mode bases like Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, and Capture the Flag. In addition are the intriguing Overdose and painful Nail Slaughter.

In each mode you'll get to show off each of the character's unique traits—each has its own power and agility rating. Selecting a character from the list jumps you to a loadout screen

where you pick two weapons from the arsenal to bring to this fight. The arena-themed gameplay ensures that you're in the spotlight to entertain the crowd, and that means dazzling onlookers with slick moves and deadly finishing attacks, running off walls, spinning, and jumping—all while unleashing ammo from armaments that will be familiar to *Unreal* universe fans (rocket launcher, flak cannon, shock rifle, etc.).



It doesn't look too comfortable or too maneuverable, but this armor doesn't stop you from moving fast and striking hard.



■ Power-ups and extra power opportunities will create natural action points on each of the maps as you fight for the best loot.

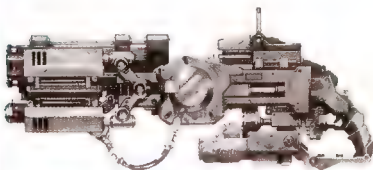


■ Grab the shield power-ups to give you a better fighting chance when the combatants meet for a showdown.

New To You

Dazzling your eyes with its colorful environments and weapon effects is a hallmark of the *Unreal* franchise, and while *UC2* looks like one of the prettiest games we've ever seen on the Xbox, it also has a few fresh tricks up its sleeve. Aside from adrenaline powers that give you various in-combat boosts, you'll be able to deflect projectiles using your melee attack to block bullets.

That's right — melee fighting is coming to an *Unreal* arena near you. Switching deftly into a third-person camera perspective, you'll be able to unleash devastating attack moves with swords and axes; when combined with leaping aerial maneuvers that will land you in an opponents' face in an instant, the game should provide some truly memorable frags.

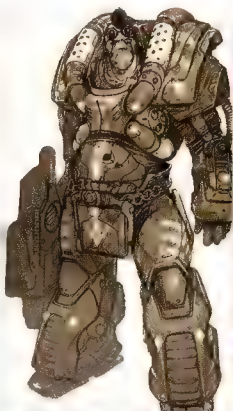


■ Get too close, and you'll need your melee weapon, which requires a third-person perspective so you can use the environment effectively, avoid attacks, and time your own sweet kills.

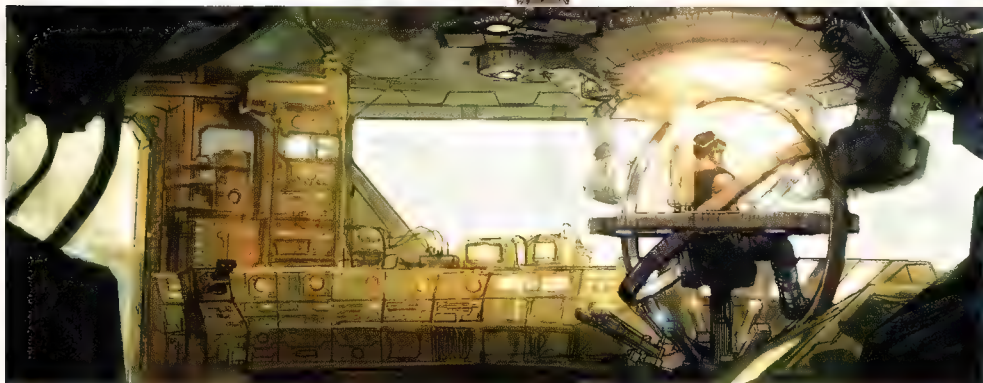
Special Guest Appearance

Another benefit of the move to Midway's stable is the rumored integration of a character or two from the publisher's original powerhouse franchise, *Mortal Kombat*. Well, it's true. *MK* star Raiden will be a playable character in *UC2*, complete with his own finishing moves, and will join about 13 other characters, each sporting their own special skills.

A single-player tournament mode will get you practiced in the moves and abilities of each character, but clearly the ultimate visceral payoff is on Xbox Live, where you'll compete against the best in explosive action. Considering how finely polished the maps and characters are that we've seen so far, we have high expectations that Epic will be delivering an Xbox Live tour de force when *Unreal Championship 2* ships in March.



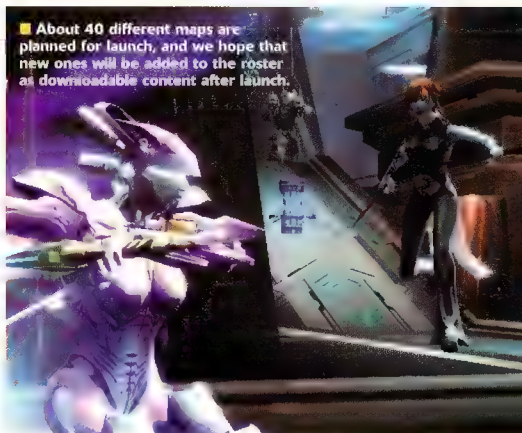
Just because you can switch to a melee weapon for up-close battles doesn't mean you have to. Rocket launchers can get the job done at any distance.

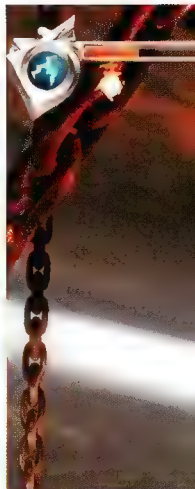


■ From character models to weapon effects to explosive effects, every graphical detail looks to be pushing the Xbox to the very limits of its potential.



■ About 40 different maps are planned for launch, and we hope that new ones will be added to the roster as downloadable content after launch.





Ninja Gaiden Hurricane Packs

A bigger, faster, and more powerful Ninja Gaiden

PUBLISHER **TECMO** | DEVELOPER **TEAM NINJA** | PLAYERS ON LIVE **1** | EXTRAS **TOURNAMENTS**



You're doomed in Vol. 2. Just accept it.

Ninja Gaiden is practically a work of art. Fast, smooth, endlessly enjoyable, and even a healthy challenge, Team Ninja and Tomonobu Itagaki's opus is a perfect example of passionate videogame creation. With the introduction of the *Hurricane Pack Vol. 1* and *Vol. 2* (available now to all Xbox Live members), Itagaki has upped the ante again.

And oh, by the way, they're both free.

HURRICANE PACK VOL. 1

The first *Hurricane Pack* is not just a token extra goody created for fans of the game. It's a new battlefield, carefully conceived for the ongoing Master Ninja Tournament, a score-based competition that uses Karma points to sort out the Ninja Masters from the Ninja Dogs.

TOP TIP!

Even in the B2 Basement you should try to win in order to build up your Karma points. In essence, you can buy everything and upgrade all of your weapons. It requires patience, but it works.



It works like this: in the *Hurricane Pack*, your screen interface has one new addition in the upper-left corner – your Karma points. At the joining of every battle, a clock ticks down. If you can clear out the group of foes in the allotted time, you get a huge Karma bonus. You also receive points for pulling off extended combos or performing Intercepts (more on that later). Your cumulative score for the entire game is uploaded to Xbox Live using the service's scoreboard technology, and the top players will be awarded fabulous prizes.

Fortunately, the download is available to all *Ninja Gaiden* owners, even if you don't wish to participate in the tournament.

WHAT'S NEW?

On the offensive front, in chapter one you'll be gifted a new bo-staff type item called the "Lunar." It's a little more powerful and has a better range than the Vagoonian Flail, and can be upgraded to level three (with its physical appearance changing along the way).

Gameplay-wise, you'll be confronting a handful of new enemies, including a batch of huge ogres prior to the boss battle at the end of chapter ten (and beyond) and packs of cat-like ferocities in chapter four. New costumes will unlock after you finish the game, too. Ryu also starts with a new technique called Intercept, whereby our fearless ninja can block a powerful attack and with the proper timing counter it. Look for the split-second lightning flash and then deal the pain.

Best of all, however, is the new camera. By clicking in the right thumbstick, you can now see the world of *Ninja Gaiden* from a view controlled

by you. It's actually not particularly helpful in combat situations, as you'll be far too busy engaging the enemy, but it's a godsend in the exploration parts of the game, which, as veteran ninjas know, is quite a bit of it.

HOW'S IT PLAY?

When you get beat down on the first chapter, it's a humbling feeling. In fact, it's a lot like the very first time you played *Ninja Gaiden*. You adapt, you improve, and ultimately you become a better player, which is part of what this game is all about. Though you may curse under your breath when you find that weapons can only be had by turning in scarabs and that Ninpo techniques are only available for 20,000 essence points each at the shop, you'll appreciate the design choices in the end.

THE FINAL WORD

The new camera, new enemies, new weapon, new challenge, and the free factor all add up to make *Hurricane Pack Vol. 1* a no-brainer for Live-enabled *Ninja Gaiden* owners. The game is changed enough to warrant an entire play-through. This is hands-down the best piece of downloadable content to date, and a perfect example of how to enhance the gamer's experience by utilizing Xbox Live.

HURRICANE PACK VOL. 2

The second *Hurricane Pack* follows on the heels of the first like the twirling arc of a second shuriken burying itself right into the target next the first volley. So how do you top Vol. 1?



Well, you may be disappointed or relieved that, depending on how you fared in the first pack, you will not have to play through all of *Ninja Gaiden* again in Vol. 2.

Instead, you'll be thrust into the multi-story tower from Chapter 15, locked in each of the statue rooms, and pitted against horde after wave of amped-up, super-pissed-off enemies. Even we, who proudly finished *Hurricane Pack Vol. 1* with a handful of Master Ninja rankings to go with it, were shamed early on by the even more intense difficulty level.

Naturally, it doesn't help that you don't have a cool new weapon like the Lunar to play with this time, and your other weapons are not fully powered up. You do pick up projectiles like the exploding shuriken, though, and you get an unlimited amount.

Ultimately, Vol. 2 doesn't have the same "whole new game" feel that the original download did, but it is nevertheless a worthwhile addition to *Ninja Gaiden* that's completely different from what was offered in *Hurricane Pack Vol. 1*. And the fact that both downloads are free is just plain awesome.

THUMBS UP

THUMBS UP

TOP TIP!

The second *Hurricane Pack* follows on the heels of the first like the twirling arc of a second shuriken burying itself right into the target next the first volley. So how do you top Vol. 1?

SPORTS ON LIVE

The goal line is now online – are you?



The new generation of sports games has recognized that the playground of the future is Xbox Live. Your skills against the tired computer may be impressive, but there are no AI exploits, no resets, and no excuses against the ever-growing legion of diabolically free-thinking, flesh-and-blood opponents on Live. If you're only playing sports games single-player, your intelligence must be artificial.



Get into the Game

If you're going to dive into online sports gaming, there are a couple of fundamental yet often overlooked ways to drastically improve your game and raise your winning percentage.

Choose the Right Team

Sure, every gridiron warrior wants the Eagles so they can scramble with McNabb and bomb to T.O. all day long, but many players just won't want to play against the birds. You can't blame them because most NFL teams wish they could avoid Philly themselves. Don't rely on outmatching your opponents' stats – learn to play the game better. But you can also be sneaky by choosing upstart teams with strong players that don't necessarily dominate in the ratings, like the Cleveland Browns

fastest players. Baseball managers will need to know when to sacrifice plate power for more steady gloves. And it goes without saying that you have to understand which hockey lines are strong penalty killers. Take the time to read and understand the stats, and you'll be able to formulate a more educated attack.

Know the Game

Lesser-used moves, like pump fakes, pitch outs, or on-the-fly play calling, can make all the difference in a tight contest. If you know the ins and outs of the game, you can dominate even when your team is outmatched. Study the instruction booklet and only take on the game's top-rated AI if you must play single-player.

Don't Be Afraid to Lose

Nobody goes undefeated. But rather than soak in a dirty diaper, learn from your opponent. How did he beat you? What did you do wrong, what choices could you have made to make the game

closer? If he stooped so low as to use glitches or exploits to make the game seem unfair, figure out ways to negate them. Check out the online message boards, where you'll no doubt find others commiserating.

Play Like a Man

This is the golden rule of online gaming. Have some self-respect and dignity, and treat others as you wish to be treated. Don't be a "cheeser," running the same play over and over again. Don't disconnect from games if you're losing, and don't harass other players verbally or in the game. Be gracious in victory and defeat. Griefing is immature, and if your online rep hits the gutter, nobody will want to play with you. If you're up against a hooligan, simply remove your headset and show them what's what by whipping them fair and square.

Ready to get into the game? Read on for a more in-depth look at the top sports games Live has to offer.

Know Your Team

Understand the depth charts, know your bench, and be aware when to switch things up. Most experienced players go right into their roster the moment a game starts and sub in their

FOOTBALL**Madden NFL 2005**DEVELOPER **TIBURON**PUBLISHER **EA**PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-4**EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS, TOURNAMENTS, LEADERBOARDS**

Madden, the granddaddy of sports videogames, has some stiff competition this year, but it's still the top-selling franchise of all time. EA's first attempt at Xbox Live gaming is a solid hit, but there are some nasty, sneaky moves your opponents may attempt.

Be prepared for the field-goal-blocking glitch. Control your fastest safety and bring him to the outside. Keep tapping the black button to switch your view. Once you can't switch anymore, your opponent has started the kick meter. Now it's a simple matter to time it right and charge in to block. Once you get the hang of it, you'll almost never fail to block the kick. It's cheese all the way, so only use it if your opponent pulls it out first.

Watch out for players who switch in speedsters like Randy Moss or Terrell Owens to return punts. And you just don't want to get into a 2005 football game against Donovan McNabb or Michael Vick without keeping a QB spy on them at all times. Also, learn how to switch your plays and hot routes with audibles because some smart-alecks like to use hurry-up offense through the entire game.

**ESPN NFL 2K5**DEVELOPER **VISUAL CONCEPTS**PUBLISHER **ESPN VIDEOGAMES**PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-8**EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS, ONLINE LEAGUES WITH STAT TRACKING**

ESPN NFL 2K5's unmatched presentation puts you right into the broadcast with an intro by Chris Berman and realistic camerawork cutting around the stadium's game-day atmosphere. The highlight for online gamers, however, is the ability to bring your league's stats online — the leagues.espnvideogames.com website creates a home base for your teams, tracking a plethora of stats and allowing users to create news stories, complete with quotes like Donovan McNabb's reaction to being traded to the Patriots.

**EA SPORTS 2005**

It's game time! EA Sports 2005 gives you an instant hit, and the party only gets more fun with game features. Looking for key team features for 2005? EA Messenger, which allows you to forward instant messages from the game to email. Tournament updates can be sent to some cell phones or pagers, and end-of-game stats can be emailed as well. EA's scrolling ticker offers real-world score updates as well as your friends' results and tournament updates. Finally, Quick Tournament allows you to create immediate challenges for four or eight participants, or you can host online tournaments and create teams, track your games, and receive medals when your next tournament opponents come online.

EA understands why sports fans dig for the latest and greatest, so the publisher has presented the EA Sports Premium Pass for *Madden NFL 2005*. For \$19.99, subscribers receive perks like a reputation boost, exclusive tournaments, members-only medals, and an online command center offering tournament and league standings with expanded statistics, which will soon fold in with EA's Fantasy Football service as well. This includes access to members-only message boards, leaderboards, and enhanced web leagues and tournaments. Your name will also be highlighted in all menus — hearts aflutter! For more info, check out www.easports.com.

SPORTS ON LIVE (Cont.)



BASKETBALL

NBA Live 2005

DEVELOPER **EA CANADA**

PUBLISHER **EA**

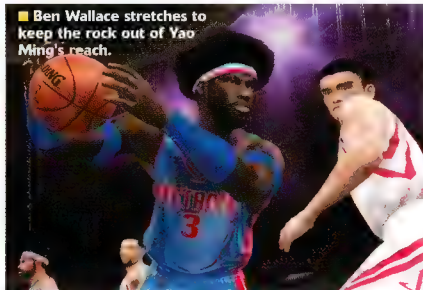
PLAYERS ON LIVE **2**

EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS, USER-CREATED TOURNAMENTS, ONLINE LEADERBOARDS**

NBA Live 2005's revamped Dynasty Mode and dunk contest are the highlights of this year's edition (neither of which benefit online players), and EA took a step backward by removing player profiles and the EA Sports Bio, which benefits gamers who stick to the EA brand. However, this is still the most solid game of rock on the market, and, despite strong competition from ESPN, it offers the best Xbox Live gaming experience.

More so than any other sport, the virtual hoops contests require a mastery of the game's controls. In order to dominate online, you should be familiar with all of the in-depth commands, like the fade-away jump shot or calling for a screen.

Most importantly, however, memorize all of the on-the-fly play calling available so you can adjust to your opponent's moves immediately. Giving up even one basket because of blown coverage can make all difference. Knowing how to adjust from zone to double-team can stifle one-man forces like Shaq and result in a quick turnover. Or, better yet, fend off cheap cherry-picking cheaters!



ESPN NBA 2K5

DEVELOPER **VISUAL CONCEPTS**

PUBLISHER **ESPN VIDEOGAMES**

PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-8**

EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS, ONLINE LEADERBOARDS**

Although *ESPN 2K5's* core gameplay is a step behind *NBA Live 2005's*, its online features are actually superior. The feature-rich ESPN website offers more support for online leagues and dedicated message boards for Xbox Live gamers, while the game itself supports up to eight players online, as opposed to Live's two. With the fantastic ESPN introduction to online matchups and even a variety of online games available, gamers interested in a Live experience should check out this title, especially at its bargain price of \$20.

ESPN College Hoops 2K5

ESPN College Hoops 2K5 offers over 320 Division 1 teams, more than any other college game ever. With the support of the ESPN brand name and a feature-rich website, as well as that low \$20 price, this one sounds like a worthwhile investment...but with a fairly low user base, don't be surprised if you can't always find challengers on Xbox Live.

NCAA March Madness 2005

NCAA games' most interesting features always rest in Dynasty Mode, where you spend many seasons building your team from the ground up, almost like an RPG. This is irrelevant to online play, but if you prefer the furious desperation of the college atmosphere to the established superstars of the NBA, this title is the way to go. It supports EA's standard online features: OptiMatch, challenges, ranked and unranked games, and user-created tournaments.

ESPN Sports 2K5

Sports' updated ESPN franchise took a big hit out of EA Sports' dominance this year by steering its first games to \$19.99, a phenomenal TV-style interface across all of its titles, featuring the familiar ESPN music, inroads and fan-favorite announcer Chris Berman; there's simply no comparison between the ESPN titles and the competitors.

ESPN also dominates with its feature-rich website (espnvideogames.com), which allows users to create online leagues to their leagues complete with customized news updates and odds of wins and losses. There's also an online leaderboard, and you can send your buddies private messages via the site.

There's no shame in the ESPN franchise: They're hungry, they're cheap, and they're fighting tooth and nail to take on EA Sports' dominance. Unfortunately, rumors of heavy lag in its titles and too few challengers available in their lobbies aren't going to help its rep.

HOCKEY

NHL 2005

DEVELOPER EA CANADA

PUBLISHER EA

PLAYERS ON LIVE 2

EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS, USER-CREATED TOURNAMENTS, ONLINE LEADERBOARDS**

Looks like there won't be a hockey season this year and hockey fans are in the doldrums. *NHL 2005* probably won't lighten anyone up, either: This year's version is disappointing in its lack of realism and has only bare-bones online features, leaving the net wide open for competitor *ESPN NHL 2K5* to score.

ESPN NHL 2K5

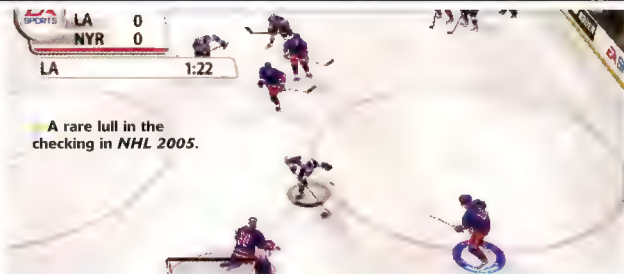
DEVELOPER KUSH GAMES

PUBLISHER ESPN VIDEOGAMES

PLAYERS ON LIVE 2-8

EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE ROSTERS**

This year ESPN takes the hockey crown with a better overall combination of gameplay, features, and support. Mini-games, like mini-rink, skills competitions, and the battle mode are all online for variety, while leagues and tournaments are supported via the ESPN website



GOLF



Tiger Woods PGA Tour 2005

DEVELOPER EA

PUBLISHER EA

PLAYERS ON LIVE 2

EXTRAS **CUSTOM COURSES AND GOLFERS ONLINE, WAGERING, TOURNAMENTS, LEADERBOARDS**

Tiger Woods has finally made his splash in Xbox Live, and golfing fans are rejoicing. They're not, however, thrilled about some online features that can't be turned off, like Tiger Vision, which makes sinking extremely difficult putts far too easy. The matches are still even, however, until you make some strategic moves to increase your chances to win.

Pay careful attention to where you stand in regard to your ball. If you line up in front of the ball, you'll hit a laser line drive that'll cut through the wind. Stand further back behind the ball, and you'll have a better opportunity to lift the ball over obstacles like trees.

There's also a very cheesy cheat to get full power on every swing. While tapping the white button, pull back to extend your swing, then slowly rock the thumbstick left and right. You'll continue to build power until you're at max. Works every time. Just don't abuse it!

Outlaw Golf 2

DEVELOPER HYPNOTIX

PUBLISHER GLOBAL STAR

PLAYERS ON LIVE 2-4

EXTRAS **LEADERBOARDS**

For a decidedly different golfing experience, check out *Outlaw Golf 2* for its low price point of \$20. Although this game is designed more for comedy than simulation, some of its mechanics are surprisingly sharp. For example, the putting system is more intuitive and realistic than either *Tiger Woods* or *Links*.

Links 2004

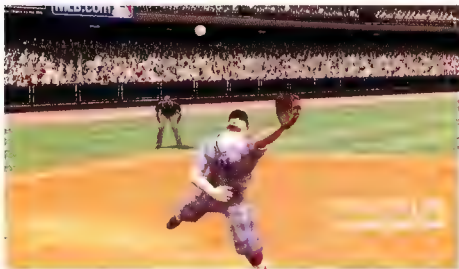
Although it's a year old, Microsoft's own *Links 2004* is still supported by its XSN service. With lush downloadable new courses and support for online tournaments with up to four players (and simultaneous play for a faster game), this is still a worthy online golfing experience.



SPORTS ON LIVE (Cont.)

BASEBALL

The big new releases for 2005 are still on the horizon: They're expected in March with the launch of next year's baseball season. However, there are still options for hitting the online diamond this winter.



MLB Slugfest: Loaded

DEVELOPER **POINT OF VIEW** | PUBLISHER **MIDWAY** | PLAYERS ON LIVE **2** | ESRB: **T** (ONLINE EXPERIENCE MAY ALTER RATING)

If you like your baseball on the less serious side – you know, faster paced and more, um, dugout-clearing brawls – *Slugfest* will have you tearing the cover off the ball. The arcade-style gameplay shines online, and Midway packed in user-created 16-player tournaments and an in-game ticker that provides score updates from MLB.com. Purists beware, though!

THE BEST OF THE REST



FIFA Soccer 2005

DEVELOPER **EA CANADA**
PUBLISHER **EA**
PLAYERS ON LIVE **2**
EXTRAS **TOURNAMENTS**

The Xbox is the official licensed video game console of the 2006 FIFA World Cup, which will span June and July 2006. Players can prepare now for the corresponding FIFA Interactive World Cup, which will offer guest appearances, special prizes, and musical guests. There are more details to come (check out esports.com for updates), but for now soccer fans should check out this sprawling title, which offers more than 350 licenses, including 20 leagues 40 national teams and – get this – 15,000 players. There aren't many bells and whistles for online play, but player-created tournaments are available.

Top Spin

DEVELOPER **MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS** | PUBLISHER **MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS** | PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-4**
EXTRAS **CUSTOM PLAYERS ONLINE, RANKINGS**

The best Xbox tennis game is an oldie but a goodie. Now available at discount prices, *Top Spin* is an addictive, exciting game that's easy to learn and very difficult to master. With a still-loyal support base on Xbox Live, you can always find enthusiastic, challenging competition. Climb worldwide ladders and compete in tournaments for singles and doubles. You won't be much competition against the masters unless you have a custom-created character with four skill levels, which requires Legend status in the single-player game. This is hardly as bad as it sounds; although few of the successful tactics you'll find against the AI are applicable online against real players, it's important to master the fundamentals, and *Top Spin* is fun no matter who you're playing against.

NASCAR 2005: Chase for the Cup

DEVELOPER **EA TIBURON** | PUBLISHER **EA** | PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-4** | EXTRAS **ONLINE LEADERBOARDS**

If rubbin' is racin' to you, *NASCAR 2005* is a solid step forward for the series and represents its first foray into online racing on the Xbox. Offline, most of your time will be devoured by the cool Fight To The Top Mode, but online, up to four players can compete against a field of AI opponents in the Featherlite Modified, Craftsman Truck, Busch, and Nextel Series.

NFL Street 2

DEVELOPER EA TIBURON
PUBLISHER EA SPORTS BIG
RELEASE DATE JANUARY 2005

Culpepper drops back to pass. His lineman gets flattened by the defense. Just as the Vikings quarterback is plastered into next week, he releases a tight spiral 25 yards down the field to Randy Moss, who makes the catch, then runs up and along the sideline wall, past a would-be tackler who instead tackles himself with the brick facing, and Moss sprints down the sideline, dancing, hooting, and taunting his way into the end zone.

Such is an exciting, and yes, completely legal and possible play in *NFL Street 2*, the sequel to last year's upstart football franchise. In addition to being able to go airborne for grabs off the wall, you can now also dig into seven all-new game modes, such as Crush the Carrier (essentially the pigskin version of "Tag"). New fields and the addition of the sickeningly real GameFace technology that lets you create yourself (or anyone else) in the game are in, too. But of course, we wouldn't be mentioning it here if it weren't all online. Yeah baby, you can now trash-talk and show your *NFL Street* skills on Xbox Live. Bring it!



NBA Street V3

DEVELOPER EA CHICAGO
PUBLISHER EA SPORTS BIG
RELEASE DATE FEBRUARY 2005

How do you take a game that already rocked the rim and ratchet it to the next level? For EA, it meant making sure that *NBA Street V3* didn't just improve – it had to evolve.

A few key things you're sure to love in the new version. First is the new graphics engine. Featuring much more realistic visuals, it's hard to say anything negative about how this hoops marvel looks. New lighting – especially evident when you play on the same court in the daytime and then at night – gives the action a much more stylized feel.

Next up is the slam-dunk contest. If you think it's anything like the one found in its simulation-based cousin, *NBA Live 2005*, you're mistaken. Sure it rocked in that game, but here it's over the top and completely real time. No time-slowing effects mean this ain't for wimps.

Finally, Xbox Live. Everything in the new *NBA Street*, including the dunk contest, is fully playable online. Throw in twice as many new moves in the two-on-two game, and this sequel is ready to bring down the backboard when it hits this February.





I thought doctors were supposed to help people. Oh, riight; you're Tediz.

Conker: Live and Reloaded

The Original Puff Daddy

PUBLISHER MICROSOFT | DEVELOPER RARE | RELEASE DATE MARCH 2005
PLAYERS ON LIVE: 2-16 EXTRAS CLANS, DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT

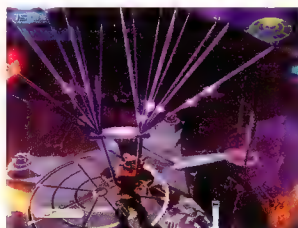


Flying over the lava as opposed to running across it will prevent singed fur. That's a fact.

Of all the retro franchises Microsoft has decided to update the Xbox, *Conker* is one of the most welcome and least expected. An updated version — featuring the latest and most potent Xbox technology — of the hilarious single-player N64 game, *Conker's Bad Fur Day*, would have been enough for most fans. But *Conker: Live and Reloaded* will pack so much more furry goodness into the equation simply by including an amazingly realized multiplayer game that could be one of the biggest hits on Xbox Live in the next year.

The new graphics engine behind wise-cracking squirrel *Conker's* world is amazing, bringing his fuzzy cartooniness to even more vivid life thanks to the advanced graphical capabilities of the Xbox. Gamers will surely waste the first 10 minutes or so of this game just admiring *Conker's* tail. It's just so...fluffy! But the bright cuddliness of *Conker* is meant to be misleading as he is soon

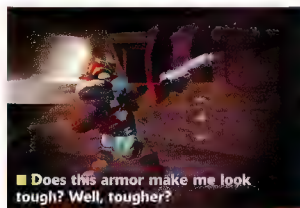
■ I may have just blown apart a tank with my rocket launcher, but I looked cute doing it!



■ Parachutes: the leading cure for falling to your death from great heights.



Oh, the squirrelmanity!



■ Does this armor make me look tough? Well, tougher?

thrown into a world of grit and despair, filled with blood and bullets and poo. Seriously. Still, even when recreating the horrific beach invasion of D-Day, Conker – and his mortal enemies the Tediz – still manage to look plush.

But aside from the cutesiness of the characters, the gritty multiplayer would be just as at home in a game like *MechAssault* or *Medal of Honor*. Multiplayer games are split into two main eras, Old War and Future War. The Old War setting looks a lot like World War II, with the SHC (Squirrels) playing the good-guy allies and the Tediz playing the other side. OK, the teddy bears are Nazis, but we all knew that already, right?

The opposing teams are broken down into classes that should be familiar to anyone who's played any class-based multiplayer shooters (see sidebar). You've got the big heavy guys, the quick little guys, guys who can pilot certain vehicles, others who can't, etc. In the early

Class War

Class-based multiplayer shooters always bring a large dose of strategy to the traditional "run around and kill everyone" style of online play, and they make coordinating your squad more than just getting everyone together to rush a room. Each character class in *Conker* has access to a different set of weapons, different special abilities, and the capability to drive different vehicles. Here's a quick breakdown:

■ **SNEEKER** – Sneekers are fast and, well, sneaky. They can cloak themselves, impersonate the enemy, or play dead. To balance this, they carry no guns, only bladed melee weapons. But watch out, those sabers are sharp.

■ **GRUNT** – Your basic foot soldier. He carries a balance of weapons, mainly an automatic rifle and a grenade launcher. Once you factor the various ammo types for each weapon, plus the ability to self heal, you realize that the grunt is a pretty versatile character class. As long as you're looking for some versatility in your death-raining abilities.

■ **SKY JOCKEY** – The ubiquitous pilot. There are a number of vehicles in the game that can be controlled by most players – but not all – but the pilot is the only one who can helm a flying vehicle. Good thing he's got a trusty parachute, which comes in handy if you get blown off a high space or get your bird shot out from under you.

■ **LONG RANGER** – The sniper. Every team has to have one – usually whoever likes to camp the most and has a healthy dollop of patience. The Long Ranger can shoot armor-piercing depleted-uranium rounds and is the only character that can wield the Magnova, a sort of super EMP grenade.

■ **DEMOLISHER** – Big Daddy, as he likes to be called, slings a big rocket launcher that can fire regular missiles or handy camera-guided ones. He also packs a big Gatling gun for spraying crowds of enemies. He also is the only one to sport "berserk" mode, which lets him run around on all fours, mauling enemies to death. Chomp! He's also the only one who can drive the big tank, but he's too big to drive anything else.



■ Only Sky Jockeys are able to pilot this flying Sky Steed.



■ It's like high noon, but in some future world where we shoot lasers.



■ Up here, above the clouds, no one can touch you. But they can shoot you down.



■ Better watch out for that guy in the turret, flyboy, or bear, or whatever you are.



■ That exploding magnova grenade looks sweet, but it stings.

versions of the games we played, the classes were already pretty well balanced. Gamers that get into the multiplayer modes will uncover a lot of depth.

The Old War and Future War are much more than just settings. The multiplayer maps actually have a storyline that you play through, connecting one to the other. So in a sense, it's a big co-op mission, available for up to 16 players. The modes tilt toward the "capture and hold" or "fight over an objective" types, as opposed to the standard options, although deathmatch will be available to the more traditionally minded.

Of course, Conker's irreverent spirit of comedy infuses the game even in its multiplayer modes. As you play, you'll hear your characters exclaim funny little lines of dialog that relate to the mayhem going on in the arena. It's cute and frightening all at the same time, which is something that could be said of the entire game.

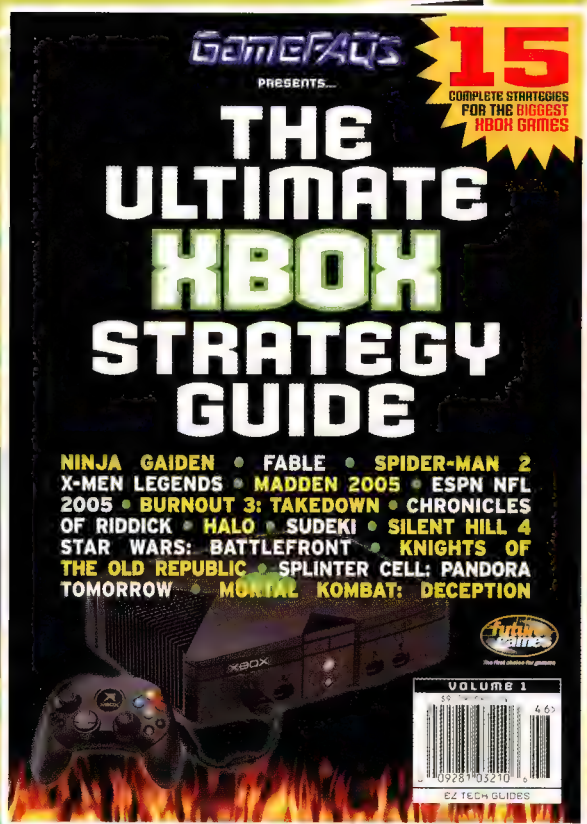
Conker's original single-player game, updated for the Xbox system, is enough to get our fur slightly damp (from drooling, nasty), but the inclusion of the robust multiplayer system – almost another game in its own right – makes this a must-play for us as it should be for you.

Vehicular Squirrel-slaughter

Conker's team-based action wouldn't be complete without some vehicles to cart your furry little butt around. The best thing about Conker's vehicles: While they have slots for drivers and gunners, you don't need at least two people to do both. If you're riding solo, you can still control the gun while you drive. Here's a breakdown of the five different kinds of rides you can choose between:

- **SKY STEED** – Your standard multi-role VTOL fighter with room for two. Gives new meaning to calling a dogfight a "furball."
- **MULE BOMBER** – The bomber not only rains iron death from above, it can seat two pilots, a gunner, and up to six passengers who need a ride to the battle.
- **R-HOG** – Not all that different from *Halo's* Warthog, this all-terrain vehicle sports room for two riders and a gunner.
- **TOAD** – A little one-person four-wheel ATV to get you from skirmish to skirmish quickly. Only certain classes can drive one of these little buggers.
- **TANKUS** – Ah, the good old tank. Wouldn't be war without one. Only the Demolisher can drive it, but anyone can hop into the turret.

TODAY'S TOP XBOX TITLES.
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The Future of Xbox Live

We went straight to the source and got the latest word from the boss of Microsoft Game Studios, Shane Kim, on where he sees Xbox Live's features and functions so far, and where they are heading in the next year.



US: Fundamentally, how important is Xbox Live and all its features to both the Xbox as a whole and its future as the leading entertainment platform?

SHANE KIM: We definitely see Xbox Live as one of the key pillars of the Xbox platform. As the world's only unified online-console-games service that quickly and easily connects friends across the globe, Live is able to provide benefits, features, and unique programming that make the overall Xbox experience unlike anything else out there.

Xbox Live's functionality, ease of use, and content are key factors that set us apart as an online-gaming service, as opposed to the simple hardware peripherals offered by competitors.

This carries over to our strategy as a games publisher. Consumers are at a point where they expect an online component to their video games, whether that's with downloadable content or thrilling multiplayer options. At Microsoft Game Studios, we're developing top-quality, Live-enabled titles like *Halo 2*, *Forza*, and *MechAssault 2* that clearly showcase the power of the Xbox Live service in exciting ways.

US: Hitting one million subscribers was a significant milestone in Live's story – what elements of the service do you think were most important in getting that many Xbox gamers online?

SHANE KIM: No one else offers the breadth and richness of online gameplay that can be found on Xbox Live. Live offers easy access, communication, and immediate gameplay. Live also offers the best games with more than 150 Live-enabled titles by year's end. The unified service makes it quick and easy to download new maps, levels, characters, weapons – which keeps the game experience fresh and exciting. Lastly, Live's unique programming creates compelling reasons to visit more often and stay longer, including Game With Fame tournaments, Mystery Gamer, and Play To Win.

These have played a significant role in helping bring more than one million Xbox gamers onto

the Xbox Live service. We're also looking forward to titles like *Halo 2* bringing lots of additional gamers onboard.

US: How do you judge Xbox Live's success – in its subscriber numbers or in its innovations as an online entertainment destination?

SHANE KIM: We became a one-million-subscription online service faster than other subscription services, such as AOL and TiVo. While our record-setting Xbox Live membership numbers are a reflection of success, we don't want to overlook how satisfied our Xbox Live members are with the service. We receive consistently high satisfaction ratings across the globe, and we're committed to continuing that trend by providing gamers with the most thrilling, seamless online gaming experience possible.

We listen to the gamers and are consistently working to provide the features they want to see in an online service, whether it's through epic games, downloadable content, access to friends across the globe, or unique programming.

US: What's most important to the future of Xbox Live: new features and functions (video chat, Xbox Live Arcade) or innovative games (such as *Halo 2*, *MechAssault 2*, *Lone Wolf*, and *Tom Clancy's Splinter Cell Chaos Theory*)?

SHANE KIM: It would be hard to prioritize one over the other. We want to continue to offer something for everyone with content such as Video Chat and Xbox Live Arcade, but it's important that we're also pushing the industry forward with innovative online gameplay for the traditional gamer in games such as *Halo 2*, *MechAssault 2*, and *Forza*. All of these features and titles are must-haves for Xbox Live and our customers.

US: What existing features of Xbox Live would you like to see improved at this point of its development?

SHANE KIM: We're amazed with the progress of Xbox Live to date. *Halo 2* has introduced a number of features that take full advantage of Xbox Live and, of course, we'd like to see our third-party publishers, as well as our first-party developers, continue to leverage the full potential of the Xbox Live platform.

The new features we're seeing in *Halo 2*, in particular the party system which allows you and your friends to join a "party" and travel seamlessly from game to game and match to match as a single cohesive unit, as well as the integration with Bungie.net, are examples of how we can continue to innovate online video gaming.



US: *Can someone signing up for Xbox Live membership in the coming year expect their service to continue improving as attention is turned to next-generation systems?*

SHANE KIM: Absolutely! Xbox Live is a constantly evolving platform regardless of the hardware. The online service will continue to grow. Additionally, we have some incredible first- and third-party titles slated for 2005, which we believe will continue to provide incredible online-gaming experiences.

US: *Microsoft as a game developer has led the charge of Xbox Live innovations in its own games. Ubisoft clearly had great success and helped Xbox Live with its range of games – will other third-party developers and publishers be more actively encouraged to offer fresh, innovative online functions in their games?*

SHANE KIM: We've always encouraged our third-party partners to look at new ways to take advantage of what Xbox Live has to offer gamers, and I think that we're hitting a curve

where they're beginning to truly realize the full potential of a unified online videogame service. It's Microsoft Game Studios' job to blaze the trail on our platforms, and our investment in how titles take advantage of Xbox Live is a great example of that mission. I believe that our third-party partners have taken notice of our success and are investing to follow suit, which will in turn make the service even more compelling for Xbox customers.

US: *Xbox Live Arcade is a great addition to attract more casual gamers to the service, but the likely cost of the games has caused controversy. Do you expect casual gamers to pay \$15 for a suite of three old arcade games?*

SHANE KIM: Xbox Live Arcade will offer something for everyone in the household at a price point that fits your budget. Don't let the Arcade name fool you, the service will feature much more than simple retro games. Gamers will enjoy full titles – new content and original games – many of which will include level upgrades and premium-content downloads. For

instance, *Hardwood Solitaire* includes more than 140 versions of solitaire complete with custom soundtracks, high-score upload, and much more. Pricing will range from \$9.99 for basic games to \$19.99 for more fully featured titles.

US: *What's your "dream vision" of the ultimate Xbox Live service – its functions, its connections, etc?*

SHANE KIM: We want to be able to continually lead in innovation, providing unparalleled services and features that meet and exceed what gamers want from their online gaming experience. I envision an online-gaming service that appeals to a broad audience, including your traditional gamer, as well as the growing female demographic and younger audiences. Great content with something for everyone. My dream vision is seeing a worldwide community of millions and millions of gamers connected through Xbox Live, communicating through voice and video chat, enjoying the most amazing, seamless videogame experience on an unprecedented scale. **XBOX**





Full Spectrum Warrior

Real-time strategy redefined – online

PUBLISHER **THQ** DEVELOPER **PANDEMIC** PLAYERS ON LIVE **2-PLAYER COOPERATIVE**
EXTRAS **DOWNLOADABLE CONTENT, REPLAY TRADING**

Original U.S. Army Mode



The developers at Pandemic have kindly hidden the entire original U.S. Army training-tool version of *Full Spectrum Warrior* on the game disc. While you can't play it on Xbox Live, it is nevertheless an awesome Easter egg. It's literally like an entire game in itself, and very different from the game released for us noncoms! To access the U.S. Army Mode, simply head into the Extra Content screen on the Cheat Codes menu, and then enter in the following: **HA2P1PY9TUR5TLE**.

There's no game on Xbox quite like Pandemic's *Full Spectrum Warrior*, and thus, no game on Xbox Live captures its same tense showdowns. Famously, this commercial game was originally developed as a training tool for the U.S. Army in proper moving and covering techniques while simultaneously allowing recruits a bit of fun. Coated with a fictional plot and mission structure, it was turned into a critically and commercially acclaimed Xbox war game.

As a strategy/action game, *Full Spectrum Warrior* casts you as the omniscient commander of four-man Army squads Alpha and Bravo of the Charlie 90 unit. You don't win with twitchy controller movements and hand-eye coordination as you might in a standard shooter. Rather, *FSW* is a cerebral experience that you conquer with your mind. Picture this.

Pinned down by a handful of n'er-do-wells, you're safe behind an overturned car, but how do you attack? You'll have to think like the real U.S. Army in order to escape the situation alive. You must keep your foes busy by using one

Games of Live: Full Spectrum Warrior



team to lay down suppression fire (careful, this burns ammo quickly!) while the other squad moves into a position where they have a clear firing angle on the enemies.

The game is a challenging, adrenaline filled, and uniquely fun mental exercise, and the best part of it all is that you can play it on Xbox Live with a friend. Indeed, you and a buddy can hop online and experience the entire campaign together with one of you in constant control of Alpha team and the other in charge of Bravo's movements and tactical actions.

Cooperation is of the utmost importance. If you don't plan your steps well or fail to cover each other while moving, you will be shot, you will be killed, and thus you will lose. Of course, the theory is that two heads are better than one, and if you're online with a friend you know well, the two of you should be able to function like a well-oiled machine. If this is the case, we suggest you crank up the difficulty level in order to maximize the challenge and provide the ultimate test of your wits and strategies.

You're looking at 10-12 hours (or more, depending on which difficulty level you're playing on) of cooperative gameplay as you and your buddy spend the day (literally – the campaign takes place from dawn to dusk) with Charlie 90. We suspect that only real Army guys could take that much intensity in one sitting, but for those looking for a unique Xbox Live experience, a full day with *Full Spectrum Warrior* and a friend is something you'll likely not forget anytime soon.

XBOX



Free Downloads!

Two all-new levels, Epilogue #1 and #2, are now available for download. For those that can't get enough Army action/strategy, this is just the thing to satiate you. For more details, see page 39.



Xbox Live and In Person

Hosting an Xbox LAN party is easier than you think, and more fun than you can imagine.

Now that you're gaming online with Xbox Live, you might wonder why you'd ever want to host (or attend) a LAN party. The answer is simple: LAN gaming is an absolute blast. Sure, you can talk trash with fellow players using Xbox Live's Communicator, but nothing satisfies like scoring a touchdown in *Madden NFL 2005* or a frag in *Halo 2* and then turning around and taunting your opponent in person. Best of all, you can combine your LAN party with Xbox Live – it's your house versus the Internet.



THE HOST WITH THE MOST

A LAN party is still a party, and it needs some planning. Here are the essential steps to making sure everybody has a blast:

- Send out invites: Even if it's a simple email, ask people to RSVP for the event and use the invite as an opportunity to lay out the party's rules.
- What games and hardware will the guests need to bring?
- Will everyone need to chip in for food? (If so, specify an amount.)



Nature's perfect snack? Maybe, but it's definitely a good choice for your LAN party – it's cheap, tasty, and easy to vacuum.

- Who will handle clean-up?
- Will people be able to stay the night?

Make sure that the gaming space is ready well in advance of the event and that you have plenty of chairs, cups, plates, and whatnot for everyone. Run any power/data cables behind the furniture and away from traffic areas (or tape them down with gaffer's tape, available at your hardware store; it lacks the sticky residue that duct tape leaves behind).

Also, it's also your responsibility to order pizza, refill snacks, get more soda, and so on. You'll be able to play games too—just be ready to handle this traditional party host stuff, too.

WHAT YOU PROVIDE

You're hosting, so it's your hardware that will power this powwow. Thankfully, because of the Xbox's built-in Ethernet card, you need to have only a few pieces to hook up the systems.

Network hub: If the party is simply you and a couple of other friends with two Xboxs, a hub isn't necessary: Just connect the machines to each other with a System Link or crossover cable (more on that in a second). If you have more hardware than that, however, you'll need to get a network hub – the same kind that PCs use. If you already have a router set up to use your Xbox and PC

online at the same time, you can use that, too. For hardware recommendations, see page 92.

Cables: If you're using a hub, you'll need to have a standard Ethernet cable for each Xbox. If you directly connect two Xboxs, however, you want a "crossover cable," which is wired differently from a regular Ethernet cable. Traditionally it's bright orange, but the official Microsoft System Link cable is a crossover cable, and it's black. No matter which version you need or which version you get, as the host, you should provide all necessary cables.

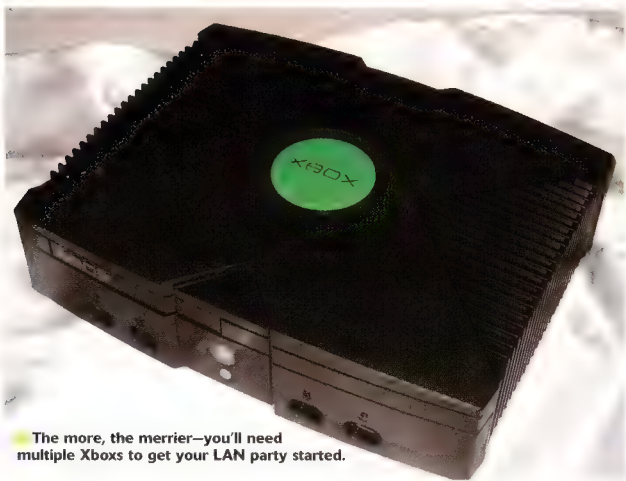
Extra controllers: Just in case someone forgets to bring theirs or more people show up than you expect, it's wise to have spares. Nobody wants to be left out.

Big-screen television: You'll obviously need more than one TV to accommodate everyone, but you should let your fellow gamers use your main TV, especially if it's a large-screen HDTV that takes full advantage of the Xbox's graphical prowess.

Miscellaneous: Be prepared with extra Xbox power cords, Xbox A/V adapters, and at least one extra power strip/grounded extension cord.

WHAT THEY BRING

It's totally acceptable to ask people to supply some of their own hardware. The following are items that your guests should be willing to bring along.



The more, the merrier—you'll need multiple Xboxs to get your LAN party started.



They're not indestructible, so make sure you have a spare AV cable or two just to be safe.



Have a few extra controllers at the ready in case someone forgets or breaks theirs. Satin pillow optional.

Xbox: Everyone should bring their Xbox. Not every person playing needs to have their own system (you can play games in split-screen mode, after all), but it's better to have too many systems than not enough. You won't need more than four.

TV: Lugging around a TV is a lot of work, so you should require only a few helpful guests to bring theirs along. A good rule of thumb for in-game usage is two people per TV. Any more than that and space starts to become an issue.

Xbox games: Each Xbox will need a copy of the game that is being played. Since not everyone may want to play the same game at the same time, it's a good idea to have several

titles available, so ask everybody to bring their favorites. You might want to hit the local rental outlet and sign out a few copies of the most likely candidates, too.

LAG-FREE GAMING

Now that you've got the room wired, take your guests onto Xbox Live! If you decide to head online for a little cooperative play during your LAN party (with games like *Splinter Cell Pandora Tomorrow* and *Top Spin*) or to launch a *Halo 2* or *MLB SlugFest: Loaded* user-created tournament to mark the occasion, it's important that you get the best possible connection. Although Xbox

Live requires a broadband connection, a variety of factors, such as general Internet traffic and ISP restrictions, will impact the overall quality of your 'net connection.

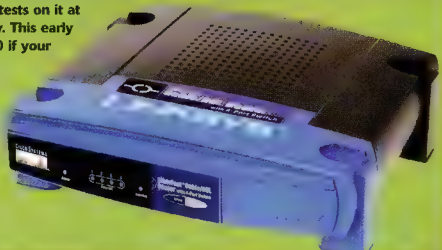
Always look for the green connection signal when seeking hosts to join. If you're hosting an online game, set your game for one or two less than the recommended maximum number of players, just to be safe. Also, since lag is primarily determined by upload restrictions, if you plan on hosting a lot of online games, you should check with your ISP to see if you can increase your available bandwidth.

And enjoy yourselves!

Get Connected!

If you're using a router to connect your Xboxs, make sure that you run tests on it at least one day in advance of the party to make sure it's working properly. This early test will give you time to find a replacement (or to reschedule the party) if your router isn't working.

Testing the hardware is simple. For directly connecting two Xboxs, simply plug the System Link Cable into the two Xboxs and let the Xbox's onboard software handle the rest. If you're using a network hub or router, plug each Xbox (via an Ethernet cable) into the hub and turn everything on. Again, the software that comes pre-installed on your Xbox will handle all of the nitty-gritty of creating a network. If you get stumped, call 1-800-4MY-XBOX for assistance.



LIVE RACING GAMES



■ No simulation going on here – the more you wreck, the more points you rack.

Burnout 3: Takedown

The goal line is now online – are you?

DEVELOPER **CRITERION** PUBLISHER **EA**

PLAYERS ON LIVE **8 PLAYERS** EXTRAS **480P, DOLBY 5.1, CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS**

The *Burnout* series has gone from a fun and addictive arcade racer with a cult-like following to one of the most popular games on the market and a cause of mass addiction worthy of attention from the FDA. *Burnout 3*, the first in the series to be published by EA, is a stunning game for many reasons, but mostly for its online component. Being able to race and horribly mangle yourself and your friends' cars over Xbox Live is a joy practically worth singing to the rafters about.

Criterion, the Britain-based developer of the *Burnout* series, clearly knows that what sets this racer apart is its crash modes, where winning has less to do with crossing the finish line and more to do with slamming other cars until they turn into scrap metal. It's ingeniously simple – the least fun

part of most racing games is crashing and having to catch up; in *Burnout 3* the crashing part is the fun stuff.

Just straight racing online wouldn't do, however, as many other games have done that. Although you can just race online with up to eight players in this most common of modes, *Burnout 3* is so much more fun than more realistic online racers out there.

That stems from *Burnout 3*'s awesome modes like Road Rage, where you have to take out your rival's car by slamming it into walls or other cars or any number of other creative ways. Online you can play in teams with up to four cars per side, each team working together to eliminate the other side.

The other signature mode of *Burnout 3* is its



Crash Mode, where you enter an intersection at high speed and attempt to create the biggest pileup possible. Online, you can join up with a friend because two cars wrecking oncoming traffic is so much better than one. Or you can take turns wreaking havoc.

As a single-player game, *Burnout 3*'s fast-paced action and heart-stopping crashes are frightfully addictive. But taking it online is a brand-new experience and a majorly fresh overhaul of the online racing genre.

Forza Motorsport

A grand touring experience

DEVELOPER: MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS

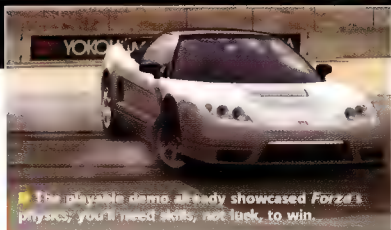
PLAYERS ON LIVE: 1-8 EXTRAS: ONLINE CAR CLUBS RELEASE DATE: FEBRUARY 2005

Some racing fans just want to get behind the wheel and drive. Others practically want to get inside the engine and personally tweak every element of their cars, actual or virtual. It's this second group for which Microsoft has toiled for three years to bring *Forza Motorsport* to Xbox Live. If all the elements come together, *Forza* could be the Xbox's greatest racing simulator.

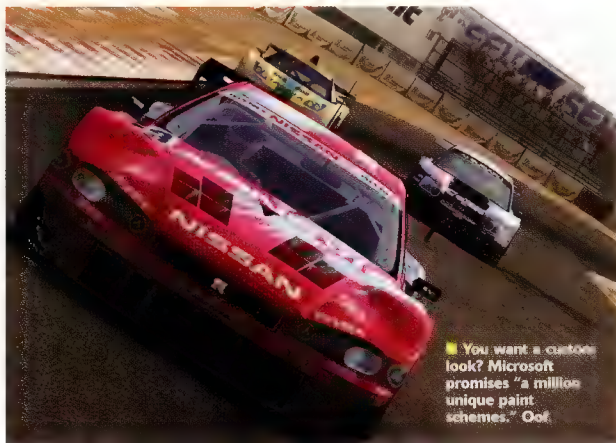
With an impressive slate of cars and manufacturblah blah blah – everyone's heard hype like that for just about every racing game. However, *Forza* really seems to have the tech and the detail to back it up. To start, the scope of the game's garage is insane – *Forza* will present 200 automobiles from more than 40 manufacturers, from Mazda to Mercedes-Benz and all points in between. Each car in the game is ownable and completely customizable in both appearance and performance. Access to a stunning 150 brands of aftermarket parts means you can adjust the paint on your Porsche, the nitrous in your Nissan, and the forced induction pressure on your Ford.

Other high points include some of the most notoriously challenging courses in the world (such as Laguna Seca and Nurburgring) and the intriguing new AI "drivatar" technology, which allows you to personally train your computer-controlled teammates to drive the way you want them to drive. *Forza*'s impressive, all-inclusive vision extends to Xbox Live as well; the game will support online play and communities in some new and very welcome ways. Career Mode incorporates both offline and online play; when you sign in to Xbox Live, you can earn extra cash to customize your car. Better still, online play won't be limited to merely head-to-head QuickMatches – you'll be able to create and join car clubs, which can accommodate 100 members each. If you're a real-life Ferrari owner and want share the love with like-minded individuals, you can simply form a Ferrari owners' club on Xbox Live without those pesky geographical borders getting in the way.

Honestly, *Forza Motorsport* simply must deliver on all it promises to avoid the dreaded overhype. However, early playables show incredible attention to detail and impressive physics. There's too much riding on these tires to leave much to chance, so it's safe to count on a bright future on this track



The playable demo already showcased *Forza*'s physics; you'll need skills, not luck, to win.



You want a custom look? Microsoft promises "a million unique paint schemes." Oof.

Imports, muscles, modifieds, tuners – whatever you want to race, *Forza* can provide.



LIVE RACING GAMES *continued*



Need for Speed Underground 2

Tuner heaven

DEVELOPER **EA CANADA** PUBLISHER **EA**
PLAYERS ON LIVE **ON LIVE: 1-8 EXTRAS 480**

It's easy to get caught up in all the things that are lame about *Need for Speed Underground 2* – the brazen, pointless proliferation of in-game advertising, the graphics that stick too closely to their PS2 source – but it's even easier to get caught up in what fantastic fun this game is. As the follow-up to last year's enormous success (the original *Need for Speed Underground* was the top-selling racing game of 2003), *NFSU2* scorches its glistening, rain-smearred pavement with an exciting roster of new race types, ranging from downhill drifting to hot-pursuit-style outruns to online action and track-based events.

Old favorites, like the excellent drag races, return alongside a beefed-up garage of car-tuning options. You can pimp your ride with a ton more parts and styling options, including trunk-filling stereos and scissor doors. In classic *NFS* style,

the racing is very accessible – newbies will find fun and success from the first peel-out, while experienced drivers can crank up the difficulty for more challenge.

Naturally, you'll find plenty of extra challenge on Xbox Live. *NFSU2* supports QuickMatch for when you just want to burn rubber, but OptiMatch gives you the choice of selecting exactly which racing mode you want. Circuits offer lap-style racing, so the better you know the course, the higher your chance of smoking someone on the other side of the country. Sprint offers classic point-to-point racing, while drag and drift races test your shifting and sliding prowess, respectively. The new Street X races gives technicians a chance to prove their skills on tight, short tracks.

While it's true that *Burnout 3: Takedown* is something of a competitor to *NFSU2*, the former

A favorite from the first game, drag racing returns in *NFSU2* – some races even zip down airport runways.



You can drive all the way down to the city glittering in the distance in your shiny Hummer. That's just cool.

is a lot more action- and chaos-oriented than the latter. Racing fans will find that they can exist in perfect harmony, sharing space in the Xbox Live garage. Any way you look at it, *Need for Speed Underground 2* offers tons of gameplay, both offline and on.

Project Gotham Racing 2

In the pink (slips)

DEVELOPER **BIZARRE CREATIONS** | PUBLISHER **MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS**

PLAYERS ON LIVE 1-16 | EXTRAS **DOLBY 5.1, CONTENT DOWNLOADS, ONLINE SCOREBOARDS, STEERING-WHEEL SUPPORT**

The *Project Gotham* franchise from established racing-game developer Bizarre Creations has long been a flagship title for the Xbox system. The first game, *Project Gotham Racing*, was available right with the launch of the console, and showed off the superior graphics possible on the new system. The sequel, though, was all about Xbox Live play and became one of the Xbox's first online hits. Even today, it shows off the best of the system, offering periodic content downloads that include new cars and entire cities, and remains one of the most popular games people are playing on Live. You can thank the superior handling physics, photorealistic graphics, and some really solid networking code for keeping *PGR2* in the race and toward the front of the pack.

Spawning countless online tournaments and challenges, *PGR2* doesn't just rest on its laurels of being a well-built online racer. The community that has been built up around it has been rewarded frequently, most recently with this year's Paris and Long Beach booster packs, each of which adds a slew of new cars and tracks to keep the racing fresh (and since they add so much to the game, they're a premium option, costing \$4.99 for each pack). It's never too late to get into a game with a healthy online community; the fun keeps up for years and years.



New downloadable content gives *PGR2* more cars and tracks.

RalliSport Challenge 2

We like it dirty

DEVELOPER **DIGITAL ILLUSIONS** | PUBLISHER **MICROSOFT GAME STUDIOS**

PLAYERS ON LIVE 1-16 | EXTRAS **480P, DOLBY 5.1, CUSTOM SOUNDTRACKS, CONTENT DOWNLOADS, ONLINE SCOREBOARDS**

You can rally time-trial style or trade paint NASCAR-style.



Rally racing is like no other type of motorsport. Take one perfectly good all-wheel-drive compact, strip the interior of any added weight, and then barrel around twisty dirt roads in exotic locales until you flip the car or send it careening into a crowd of onlookers. Crazy Europeans.

Around these parts, we like our rally racing of the digital sort (it's so hard to get mud stains out of videogame t-shirts), and we like *RalliSport Challenge 2* the best, thanks to its amazing graphics and Xbox Live options. Rally racing in general is a timed sport with drivers leaving in intervals. You can play that way, or you can also battle head-to-head on the back roads of the Kalahari desert, ramming your rivals into sand dunes. All's fair in love and rally racing, apparently. There's also hill-climbing, ice racing, and a super-cool Rally Cross mode that has you looping around an intertwining track. All of these modes are great over Live, and there are content downloads to be had as well, featuring new cars and new careers. If you and your friends like it dirty, then *RalliSport Challenge 2* is for you.

Pimp Your Hardware

Wireless gear is the way to go when setting up a LAN to hook your Xbox up to your broadband connection, so we show you how to set up a wireless router and network, and give you our top picks for headsets and controllers.

WIRELESS LANS

You haven't truly experienced multiplayer gaming until you've played on Xbox Live. Playing against computer-controlled opponents and rifling through single-player modes is entertaining, but facing off against real people on the Internet packs a much more powerful thrill. There's a good chance you'll want to connect the Xbox wirelessly as it's typically not in the same room as your PC, so we're here to help.

Wireless LANs are easy to build, and although they're inherently slower than wired LANs, they're plenty fast enough for games on Xbox Live. The beauty of a wireless LAN is that you don't need to worry about drilling holes in your floors and walls for tripping over exposed cables if you don't.

You can access your network and share your broadband Internet connection from any room in the house. You'll need some basic hardware to build your wireless LAN. Since there are three different standards for wireless networking, make sure all the components you buy support the same standards (see the sidebar below for an equipment list).

PLACING YOUR EQUIPMENT

The beauty of a wireless LAN is that you can put the equipment just about anywhere. Note the emphasis on "just about." Wireless equipment has some restrictions. Wireless LANs and cordless (not cellular) phones, for example, both transmit at a frequency of 2.4GHz. If you use a cordless telephone, don't place the telephone's base station in close proximity to any of your wireless devices.

Microwave ovens, oddly enough, will cause static at about the same frequency. Operating a microwave in close proximity to your wireless LAN could temporarily slow or even shut down your network.

In a perfect world, the coverage range of a wireless LAN is up to 175 meters. In the real

world, that range will be reduced not only by operating appliances such as cordless phones and microwave ovens, but by the materials in your walls and floors. The number of walls and floors the signal must pass through will also reduce the LAN's range. Although common wood frame and wallboard construction doesn't pose much of an obstacle, aluminum studs, steel doors, and concrete floors can pose significant problems.

BUILD PLAN

With those caveats out of the way, let's set about building your wireless LAN. The first step is to turn off all your equipment. Next, we'll physically place everything. The wireless router/access point needs to be physically wired to your gateway (modem), so you'll need to place the two devices in close proximity. You might even want to put one on top of the other. The wireless router you purchase will probably come with a short length of Ethernet cable. If it doesn't, you'll need to buy one that's at least a foot long. Plug the router in to your power strip.

Now, look at the back of your gateway.

You'll see one cable (either a telephone line or an Ethernet cable) leading away from the gateway and to the wall (or to wherever else your broadband connection comes into your home). You'll see another cable (this one will definitely be an Ethernet cable) leading away from the gateway and into the back of your computer (it will be plugged into your PC's Network Interface Card).

Disconnect the Ethernet cable that links your gateway to your PC's NIC by squeezing the tab on the top of the connector and gently pulling it out of the gateway's socket. Take a short length of Ethernet cable and plug one end into the Ethernet port on the back of the gateway, and plug the other end into the port on the wireless router marked "WAN."

Now, take the Ethernet cable that's plugged into your PC's NIC and plug the free end into your wireless router. If you took our recommendation and purchased a wireless router

equipped with a built-in wireless access point and switch, plug the Ethernet cable into port 1.

At this point, you should have the following connections:

- One cable (either telephone line or Ethernet) emerging from a wall socket and plugged into your cable or DSL modem.
- One end of a longer Ethernet cable plugged into port 1 on your wireless router, and the other end plugged into your PC's NIC.

After verifying your wiring connections, power on all of your equipment. Make sure that the power-indicator lights glow on everything (your bridge, your cable/DSL modem, and router).

HOOKING UP

Connecting your Xbox to the Internet is remarkably simple since it has a built-in Ethernet port. Remember, the Xbox doesn't have a dial-up adapter, so you must have a broadband Internet connection in order to get online with the device. Typically, that means you'll need either DSL or cable Internet service. You'll also need to purchase an Xbox Live Starter Kit, which will include configuration software, a headset (a mic-and-headphone combo you'll use to speak to your online teammates), installation instructions, and one year or three months of online access to Microsoft's service. (Note: This is above and beyond whatever subscription fee your Internet Service Provider charges.)

Once you've set up your wireless LAN, simply plug the Ethernet cable on the end of your bridge into the Xbox's Ethernet port.

If you're not already sharing your Internet access, you'll need to unplug your PC from your DSL or cable modem and plug that Ethernet cable into the Xbox's Ethernet port.

Once the Ethernet cable is hooked up, it's simply a matter of connecting the headset's controller-port adapter and running the software that came with the starter kit. The Live software will walk you through creating a Gamertag and online account. That's it!

EQUIPMENT LIST

You'll need a wireless bridge to connect your Xbox to your LAN.

A router acts like a traffic cop, directing the data traffic on your LAN. If you have a broadband Internet connection (e.g., cable, DSL, or satellite), installing a router will enable you to share that connection with every computer on your network. Since you'll be building a wireless LAN, we recommend buying a model with a built-in wireless access point (the component that broadcasts and receives the data traveling over your LAN) and a built-in switch (to give you the flexibility to include both wired and wireless components in your LAN).

If you have broadband Internet service, your service provider has already given you this piece of equipment, most likely in the form of a cable or DSL modem.

Sweet Networking Gear

D-Link AirPlus Xtreme G Wireless Router DI-624

Price: \$90

The wireless router is the centerpiece of your wireless setup, and this particular D-Link model is pretty sweet. Sporting maximum transfer rates of 108 megabits per second – more than enough for your Live connection – and operating at 2.4GHz, the AirPlus Xtreme is one of the best we could find. It's fast, secure, and easy to set up, and really, that's all we could possibly ask from our wireless equipment.



D-Link AirPlus Xtreme G Wireless Bridge DWL-G810

Price: \$120

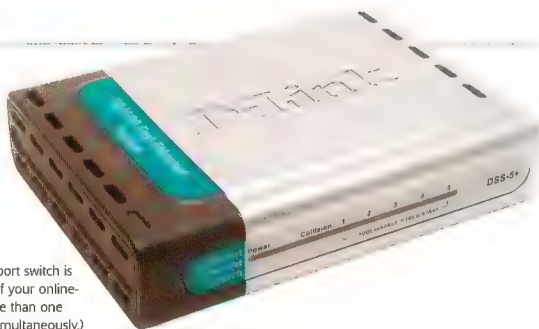
This little bad boy will be transmitting your brilliant moves in your favorite Xbox Live games through the airwaves to your router and ultimately to Xbox Live itself. The D-Link is small and can easily be placed adjacent to or even on top of the Xbox (just don't block the Xbox's fan on the rear of the console). It does require its own AC power, though, so have a spare outlet ready.



D-Link AirPlus Xtreme 5-Port Switch DSS-5+

Price: \$30

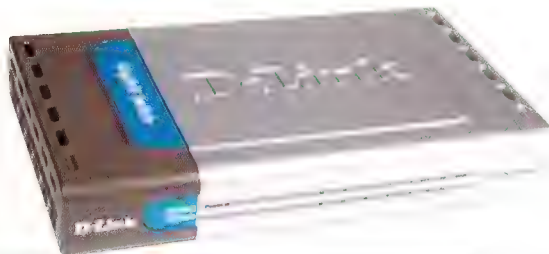
As the go-between for your Xbox and your wireless bridge, this five-port switch is a boon if you happen to be a multi-console family. You can plug all of your online-friendly videogame systems into this and you won't need to buy more than one bridge (this is assuming you won't be online with multiple consoles simultaneously.) This guy is plenty fast, very light, and stays out of the way.



D-Link GigaExpress 5-Port Switch DGS-1005D

Price: \$80

If you plan on sharing a PC (or multiple PCs) on your network, this blazing-fast switch is a slam dunk. It's Gigabit Ethernet compatible, meaning 1000 megabits per second transfer rates. While this has no bearing on your Xbox (which is limited to 10 Mbps by its internal network card) or your Live connection, this baby can have you sharing files between computers in your house at unheard-of speeds. If you're going to build a network, you might as well do it right.



THE HALO 2 HEADSET

Plantronics GameCom Halo 2 Edition Headset

Halo 2 is, inarguably, the "killer app" for Xbox Live. It makes sense, then, that a Live-focused peripheral like this one would ride the coattails. It's expensive, but it's awesome.

Taken on its own, the Plantronics Halo 2 Headset is a great piece of hardware. Plantronics has been making headsets for an eternity (for NASA, even!), and with the Halo 2 Headset, it has adapted a design used for its high-volume call-center products. This means it's meant to be comfortable for multi-hour use, and thankfully it is.

The headset fits in either ear (rather than over it like the stock hardware), so you inherently get better sound clarity. And the maker has included four different earpieces you can snap on depending which fits your ear best (two rubber and two foam). Normal ear-wax buildup means you'll have to wipe the rubber earpieces off after every few uses, but it's no biggie (ugh... did we really need that visual? -Ed)

But ultimately, is it worth \$50? If you have no qualms about the standard headset, then no. But if you're one of many whose stock headset earpiece has broken off from the headband, then this is a good way to ensure that will never happen again. Or if you like leaning back on the couch while gaming, pick it up.



Pros

- Great sound quality
- Comfortable and lightweight
- You can lean back on the couch with it!

Cons

- Ear wax is gross
- Costs as much as a game
- Standard Live headset is already pretty good



Price:
\$49.99

WIRELESS CONTROLLERS

Logitech Cordless Precision Controller

Price: \$40

Finally, a wireless alternative to the Controller S that meets or beats the pack-in pad in terms of comfort and quality. The overall construction of the Logitech is up to par with Microsoft's own (meaning it's rock solid), including a delightful D-pad, terrific triggers, and solid thumbsticks. The AA batteries are rated for 50 hours with vibration off and 300 (!) with it on. And the price is even reasonable! Sweet!



Pelican Eclipse Wireless Controller

Price: \$40

As a clone of the Controller S layout-wise, the Eclipse is both familiar and comfortable. Like most third-party pads, this one sports rubberized handle grips to enhance the feel. Force feedback can be toggled on and off using a hardware switch, which is handy for those looking to conserve battery life. Wireless performance is excellent thanks to the now-standard 2.4GHz technology, and at this price it's hard to ignore.



Xbox Live Users Beware!



Be wary when purchasing a wireless Xbox controller if you're a regular Xbox Live user. All of the existing cordless pads on the market place the expansion ports (which the Xbox Live Communicator headset plugs into) on a separate dongle that connects with a wire to the Xbox's controller port. It's done for bandwidth and power-consumption reasons, but for the Xbox Live gamer, it means that all current wireless controllers are effectively incompatible with Live as you'd have to run your headset wire (and a long one at that) to your controller port to plug in your headset. Doh! Thankfully, though, Logitech now offers a 2.4GHz wireless cordless headset for a pricey \$80.

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FEATURING MUSIC FROM KORN & PAPA ROACH



MECHASSAULT 2 LONE WOLF

In MechAssault 2, you are one of the last members of the Wolf Brigade and you are no longer confined to a BattleMech. You can walk or jump a BattleMech into the battlefield, jump into a cockpit or fly the VIL to carry you into the battle. A variety of weapons, including the VIL, are at your disposal. As you enter a persistent online world, you'll find a new world of challenges and, with your team, attempt to conquer the solar system with unlimited new weapons and new environments. The doors to your MechAssault 2. The doors to battle just got bigger.

www.mechassault2.com



It's good to play together.

XBOX LIVE



■ Crank up the surround sound, turn out the lights, and bring a friend!



■ Monsters from hell don't need to hide their shame.

Doom 3

A legend remade. On Xbox. Online.

PUBLISHER **id SOFTWARE/VICARIOUS VISIONS** | DEVELOPER **ACTIVISION**

PLAYERS ON LIVE: **2 IN CO-OP AND 4 IN DEATHMATCH**

EXTRAS: **480P, DOLBY DIGITAL 5.1, CO-OP PLAY**

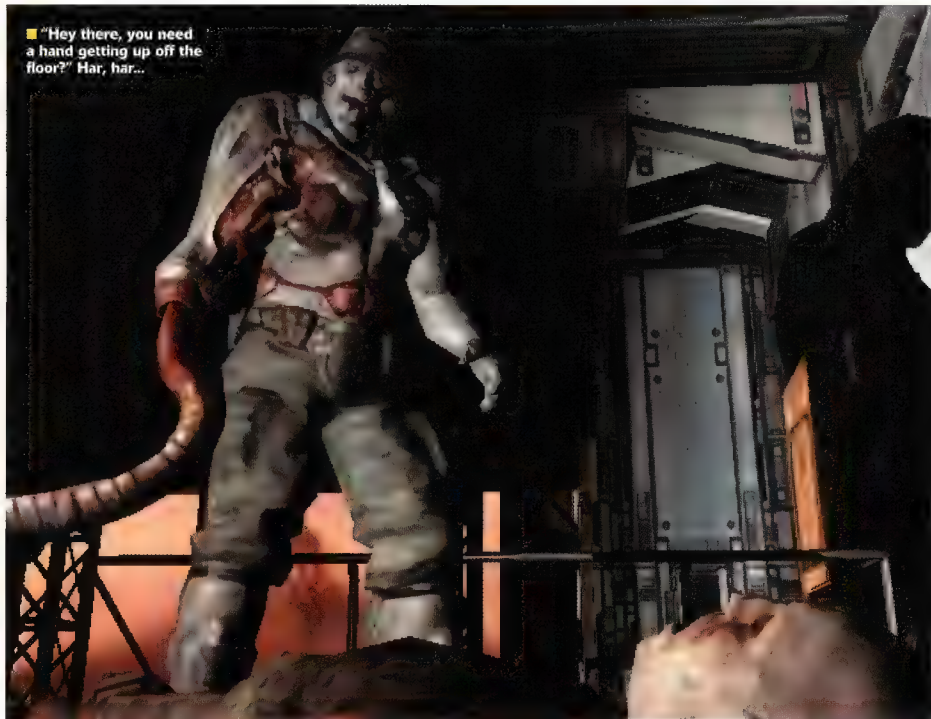
RELEASE DATE: **"WHEN IT'S DONE" (A.K.A. FEBRUARY 2005)**

Back in 1993 on the PC, the original *Doom* virtually invented multiplayer gaming as it introduced "deathmatch" to the everyday parlance of the hardcore gamer. Once hell's invading forces were repelled by your lone space marine, so started the endless battles for LAN supremacy as up to four marines floated merrily around the faux 3D tunnels, crumpling under rocket-launcher blasts and melting under the sparkling green zap of the BFG.

Fast forward to 2004, and developer

id Software reinvents its storied property, powered by the very latest rendering engine coming from the brilliant mind of programmer and co-owner John Carmack. On the back of a refreshed design courtesy of lead designer and co-owner Tim Willits, *Doom 3* unleashes a truly sensational horror/action experience. PC gamers with sufficient juice under their machine's hood are able to witness state-of-the-art lighting effects that, along with a pulsating soundtrack and ominously sterile futuristic environments, craft spine-chilling moments.

■ "Hey there, you need a hand getting up off the floor?" Har, har...



Great news: Your \$150 Xbox will pull off many of the impressive effects, and in our testing, it looked surprisingly crisp and displayed plenty of the stylish flourishes. Better yet, the straight-up action gameplay – you and your shotgun, chaingun, plasma rifle, rocket launcher, even chainsaw against Zombies, Imps, Revenants, Cherubs, and hideous spider-like Trites – is as frenetic, bloody, and chilling as you'd hope from a lonely horror adventure.

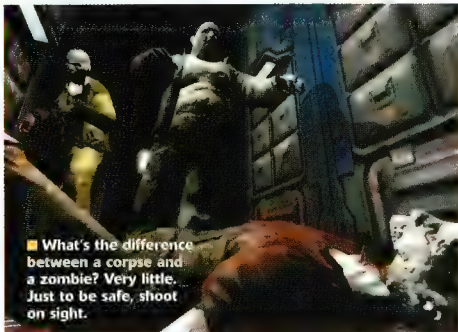
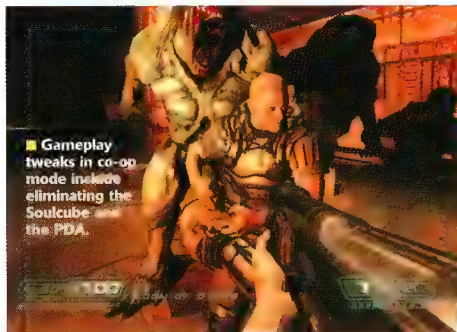
A Lone Hero?

The plot of *Doom 3* is very simple – you arrive at the United Aerospace Corporation facility on Mars for your tour of duty as a marine and listen to workers and guards who have become severely disquieted by unexplained goings-on. After a quick orientation, your first simple fetch-and-carry mission for Sarge is interrupted by hell invading. Suddenly, mild-mannered scientists become lumbering, clawing zombies. Newly zombified (it's a word, look it up...really) marines use their innate memories to be crack shots and to tactically duck and hide behind cover.

And that's not to mention the pure evil nastiness flooding through the portal in the



■ Exhibit A: The huge Hellknight.
Exhibit B: You running away (not pictured).



form of Hellknights, Lost Souls, Mancubus, and other creepy, nasty beasts.

Worryingly, this futuristic marine corps has yet to figure out the technology to place a flashlight on a weapon, and so you'll spend much of the time creeping through darkened corridors, relying on sounds to alert you to possible danger. While *Doom 3* is graphically a real powerhouse, the 5.1 surround-sound effects are also incredible. Footsteps echo and resonate on different surfaces – the pitter-patter of the spindly spider legs of the Trites on metallic floors is particularly eerie – and each pellet of a shotgun blast casts its own sound effect off the different surfaces it might hit.

Bring A Friend

So how do you make the whole single-player experience even more fun? Bring a friend for co-op play over Xbox Live or system link. Yep,

it's the feature the PC guys don't have; we've had the chance to play it, and it's amazing fun.

Many of the maps and levels have been tweaked to support the gameplay differences for a co-op challenge. The co-op campaign follows the path of the single-player story, but it's condensed. Even the opening cutscene from the single-player game that shows your lone marine stepping off the transport has been redone for co-op to show two marines arriving at the facility.

Some maps have been modified to encourage cooperative teamwork. Some of the long darkened passages in the single-player game have been lengthened still further, forcing you to work with your buddy so that one of you holds the flashlight while the other shoots whatever creatures leap out of the darkness. In our testing, it was an incredibly effective technique, requiring communication as well as creating some of its own memorable moments. While holding the



Crank up the surround sound and turn out the lights. Or else.

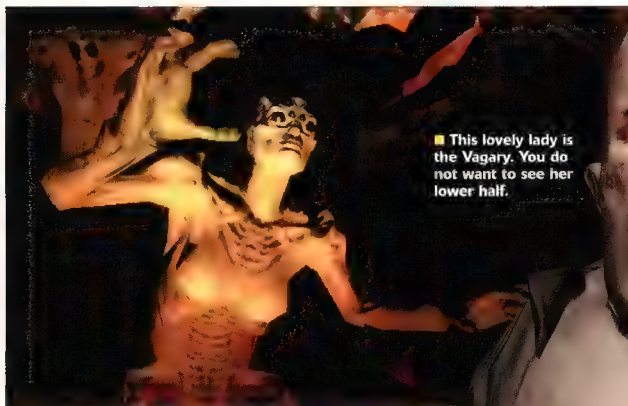


According to Vicarious Visions, some of the Xbox version's flow has been tweaked to incorporate more console-boss-like fights.



The level of detail in your enemies makes for some pants-soiling moments.





flashlight, I saw my co-op partner disappear from sight, only to reappear in the beam of the flashlight backing off and firing wildly at an approaching Imp, only then to back in to a zombie hiding in the shadows that took its own pound of flesh.

Death in co-op is dealt by having the backpack of your character remain at your corpse, and you have to retrace your steps from the start of the level to the place you met your virtual maker. Scattered throughout the levels are ammo packs and health stations designated for each player, so one person can't just waltz around picking up all the useful loot.

Return to Deathmatch

While team games and CTF formats have usurped the classic *Doom* deathmatch, the return of that mode seems almost like a journey back to a simpler multiplayer time. Five multiplayer maps shipped with the PC version, and it's still uncertain how many will be available over Xbox Live, but only four players are supported, as per the PC version.

If your taste in multiplayer matchups hasn't got too refined on a different diet of online options, shooting three other guys over Xbox Live should hit the spot nicely. A remake of the classic *Quake II* map The Edge will be part of the Live options, and it's amazing for veterans of the old school to revisit the wonderful ebb and flow of this level. Tournament and Last Man Standing options should generate plenty of Xbox Live competition, too.

Still, the name "*Doom*" owns a special place in the hearts and minds of all gamers, and if you never had the chance to experience it first time around or even if you played *Doom 3* on the PC, the cooperative mode deserves some online playtime to see just what technological marvels this Xbox console is still clearly capable of.



Be an Expert User

You know the basics – now get into the advanced stuff

Xbox Live moves pretty fast, but you won't get left behind. Here are some ways you can get all the latest info and take advantage of some of the coolest, little-known features of your Xbox Live subscription. And like all exciting journeys, it starts with a passport.



Your Microsoft.NET Passport

The first thing you should do is to create a personalized Microsoft.NET Passport login at www.xbox.com and link it to your Gamertag. Take advantage of this feature, and you'll have access to your own customized Xbox.com web page that lets you view your friends list to see who's online, manage your account, and more. Pretty useful stuff, actually.

Your .NET passport is your unique online identity that saves you from having to input your details on all the personalized sites that you visit. If you have a Microsoft Hotmail email account, you already have a Microsoft.NET Passport. To link your Gamertag, head to www.xbox.com/en-us/live and click on the My Live tab. When prompted, enter your Hotmail username and password. This will then link your address to your Gamertag, and you'll be plugged in to all the features that will improve your online experience.

If you don't have a Hotmail account, get a .NET Passport at www.passport.net. It's simple, fast, and free!

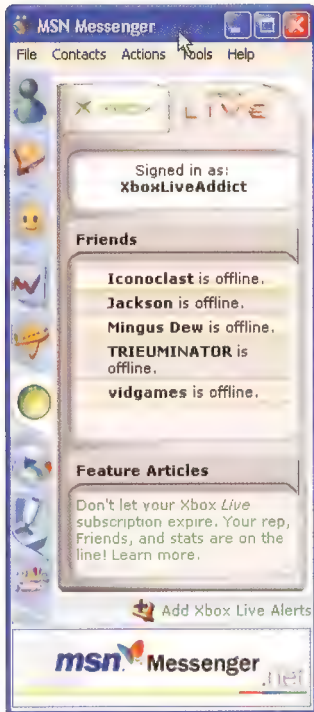
Official Xbox Forums

Web message boards are always an easy way to get info from fellow gamers, but they're even better when they're officially sponsored. Point your Web browser to forums.xbox.com, and you'll find an entire section dedicated to all things Xbox Live, including news on upcoming and current tournaments, setting up matches, answers to nagging questions, and all the plans for the daily Prime Time Programming. (What's Prime Time? See page 50.) You'll also find dedicated topics for your favorite games, so you can swap tips and strategies with your community of friends.



MSN Messenger

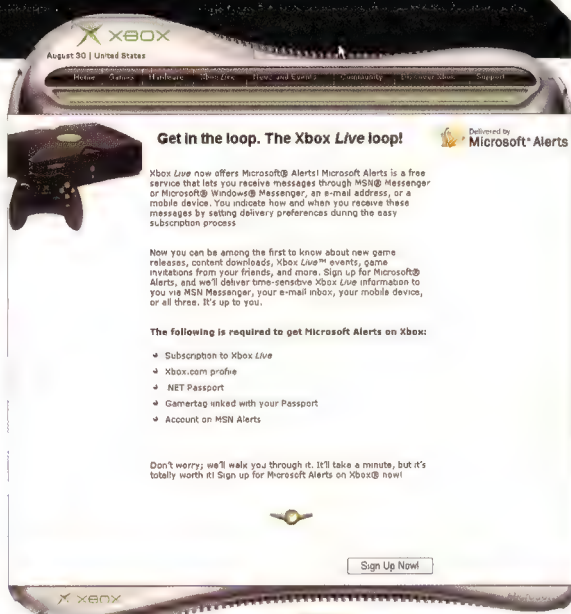
Your handy MSN Messenger not only keeps you in touch with your friends, it can keep you in touch with Xbox Live! Fire up your PC and sign up for MSN Messenger Alerts by visiting www.xbox.com/en-us/live and clicking on the link. You'll be able to find all the details on getting the latest news and download information streamed straight to your Messenger account the very moment it's available.



Spy On Your Friends

Here's one of the coolest perks of linking your Gamertag: You can peek in on your friends and see what they're playing on Xbox Live, even when you're not logged in yourself! Check

on the left side of your MSN Messenger window, and your Friends List will appear. What you see is what they're playing.



Xbox Live Alerts

You can also pick and choose what information you want to receive from Xbox, such as news on the latest content download additions or game invites from your friends, by signing up for Xbox Live Alerts. Sign up when you get your MSN Messenger hook-up to get the latest Xbox news and events information, or head on over to www.xbox.com/en-us/alerts and sign up there.

Xbox.com Newsletter

Yet another way to find out what's new with Xbox and Xbox Live is through the Xbox.com newsletter. If you didn't click the box when you signed up at the site, you can always join in by visiting www.xbox.com/en-us/discover. The link's right there in the middle of the page.



Be an Expert User Continued

The screenshot shows the Gamertag Database website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'DATABASE', 'SEARCH', 'ABOUT', 'FAQ', 'CONTACT', and 'HELP'. The 'SEARCH' tab is active. On the left, there's a sidebar with 'DATABASE TOOLS' (World Map, Add Gamertag, Fame n Shame, Search, Statistics, GTDB Store) and 'COMMUNITY' (GTD Forums, GTDB Chat, Earth: 2025). Below that are 'PHOTOS' (View Gamer Photos, Upload Your Photo) and 'ACCOUNT' (View My Profile, Edit My Info, Edit Friends & Foes, Edit My Games, Logout). At the bottom of the sidebar are 'FEATURES' (Custard Speaks, Gamertag & Munk, Live Only, Rants, Screenshots) and 'SUPPORT' (FAQ, Contact, About, Help Us, Forgot Password?).

The main content area is titled 'SEARCH' and has a 'Simple Search' button. Below it, there's a 'Advanced Search' section with various filters: Gamertag (Leave blank for any), Clash Enabled (checkbox), Country/State (Any), City (Leave blank for any), Age (13 and under, 14-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55 and over), Family Rating (G, PG, PG-13, R), Gaming Style (I hate to lose, I seek only the skilled, If you're not good, I'm not into it, I stink at most games but I never complain about losing, I talk a lot of trash when I'm winning, I talk smack with the best of em), Games (All-Star Baseball 2005, Amped 2, Auto Modelista, Black 9, Burnout 3: Takedown), and Yo Ram2600, find me some clones. There's a 'Go back to the SIMPLE SEARCH' link at the bottom.

Finding New Friends

With more than a million subscribers, Xbox Live has more than its share of fan clubs and user groups. Naturally, they're online, building their own shrines and communities to show their love. If you're looking to bulk up your Friends List and find interesting folks, try these Internet outposts.

GAMERTAG.COM

One of the most well-established and respected independent Xbox Live sites out there, Gamertag.com (formerly known as the somewhat wordy GamertagDatabase.com – the old URL still worked at press time) is exactly what it sounds like: a searchable database of Xbox Live users showing geographic location, photos, the story behind their choice of Gamertag, and whatever else they choose to share with the world. It's very easy to find folks in your zip code and put a face (and a friendship) behind those Gamertags!

At last count, there were more than 45,000 Gamertags registered at the totally free site – have you added yours? Since it's a totally optional and independent site, it's only as strong as the number of people who voluntarily sign up for it.

GAMERTAGPICS.COM

On this independent site, the focus is even more about the people and personalities behind the Gamertags. Vote on the best pictures (every user can upload multiple shots), the goofiest faces, even photos of whose gaming setup is the coolest. There's even a special section of the forum for meeting new folks. There's definitely a strong social vibe here.

Share the Experience

A simple way to share the Xbox Live experience with your friends is to let them play with you! Games like *Crimson Skies: High Road to Revenge*, *Halo 2*, *MechAssault*, *Top Spin*, and *Unreal Championship* let up to three other players join you online as your Xbox Live

"guests." While they won't have their own Communicator to talk strategy, they can still share in the good time – and, of course, you're getting them hooked so they'll want to join up themselves. Ding!

Another person for your friends list.

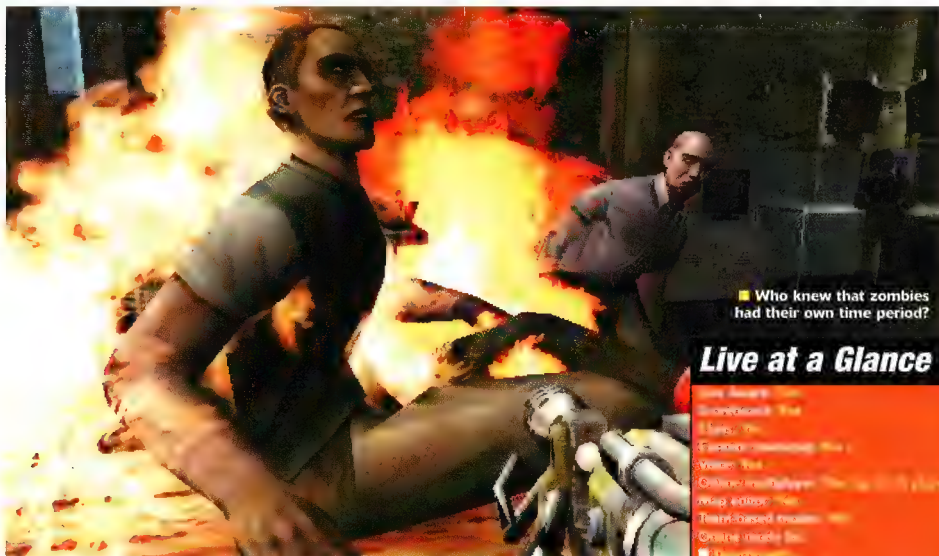
What If I Don't Want to Make New Friends?

The screenshot shows the GamertagPics website. At the top, there's a navigation bar with links: Home, Reviews, Forum, Chat, Links, Contact, and FAQ. The main header features the 'GTP GAMERTAGPICS' logo with the tagline 'PUT A FACE TO THE GAME'. Below this, there are several promotional banners for Xbox Live, Target.com, and a 90% off game consoles offer. The central part of the page is titled 'PREMIUM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT' and displays a grid of user avatars with their gamertags and locations. To the left, there's a sidebar with a search bar and a list of links including 'Hot List', 'Skillz List', 'Challenge Wins', 'Best Feedback', 'Best Intros', 'Goofy Pic', 'Pet Pic', 'Xbox Setup Pic', 'Dirty Room Pic', 'Tattoo Pic', and 'Topic Picture CP'. A green arrow points to the 'Challenge Info' link in the sidebar. The main content area also includes sections for 'RECENT VISITORS', 'Today's Birthdays', 'Winners Are Up', 'Have you got it?', 'Challenge Info', 'Report Challenges', 'Top 10 Wins', 'Top 10 Feedback', 'Newest Challenges', and 'View Your Challenges'.

Wearing Your Gamertag on Your Sleeve

You can either wait until someone asks if you're an Xbox Live gamer, or you can let them know right away. If you want to see how many other people you know are already on Live, or if you want to find some new ways to bulk up your friends list, try these:

- Add your Gamertag to your e-mail signature. This lets everybody know how they can find you on Live in a subtle, passive way.
- Post a notice for Xbox gamers on a local message board, or on the bulletin board at your local game store. After all, where you buy your games is where they buy their games, too.
- Host a tournament. Lots of the latest games feature in-game tournament support. Pick a day, announce it on all the web forums you can find, and see what happens.



TimeSplitters: Future Perfect

Time keeps on slippin'...

PUBLISHER **EA** | DEVELOPER **FREE RADICAL** | RELEASE DATE **MARCH 2005**

The entirety of the *TimeSplitters* series has managed to deftly combine classic FPS gameplay with a cheeky sense of humor and a time-traveling logic that allows for a wildly imaginative range of weaponry. The third entry in the series, *TimeSplitters: Future Perfect* doesn't seek to change the formula, but it does aim to refine it by adding a plethora of features, including online play.

Cortez, the time detective and main character from *TS2* is back, and the game picks up where its predecessor left off. As you step through the time portal to return to your own world and era (the year 2401, to be exact), you discover that things are still as screwed up as ever, so your new mission is to continue to exploit your time-traveling abilities in order to destroy the source of the creatures called TimeSplitters. Though the story mode promises to be an immersive and slyly humorous romp, your time travels remain a clever way to introduce a virtual parade of wacky firearms and sidekicks.

As you find yourself in a 1924 castle or on a train hurtling through 1969, you'll be partnered

with a variety of characters that range from a sassy Valley girl to a free-loving heat-packing hippie to a R110 robot that transfers data from other computers through a jack in its crotch. But beyond the funny features and the imaginative premise, *TimeSplitters* has always been about the gameplay in multiplayer modes, and this is the first time the series will head online, where it has always belonged.

With a lineup of modes to choose from, the one feature that stood out in the last iteration of the series (*TimeSplitters 2*) was its comprehensive map-making option. Good news. It's back for *Future Perfect*, and it's streamlined to make your map editing a smoother experience. Building a map using stackable tiles and an easy approach to lining up objects should be enough encouragement for those who want to upload their masterpieces for others on Xbox Live to enjoy online or on their own with their own set of friends. You'll even be able to create objectives for the maps you make, such as directing players to reach a specified destination under a time limit or as a race.

■ Who knew that zombies had their own time period?

Live at a Glance

- ☐ **Language & Grammar**
- ☐ **Spelling & Punctuation**
- ☐ **Reading Comprehension**
- ☐ **Writing Skills**
- ☐ **Mathematics**
- ☐ **Science**
- ☐ **History & Social Studies**
- ☐ **Art & Music**
- ☐ **Physical Education**
- ☐ **Health & Safety**
- ☐ **Environmental Studies**
- ☐ **Technology**
- ☐ **Language Arts**
- ☐ **Mathematics**
- ☐ **Science**
- ☐ **History & Social Studies**
- ☐ **Art & Music**
- ☐ **Physical Education**
- ☐ **Health & Safety**
- ☐ **Environmental Studies**
- ☐ **Technology**

TimeSplitters: Future Perfect is going for broke and hopefully, when the dust clears and the game releases, we'll be able to reap the rewards of a promising single-player mode and an insane amount of multiplayer goodies. Sharpen your map-making and time-traveling skills for this coming March.





Area 51

Close encounters of the Gray kind

PUBLISHER **MIDWAY** • DEVELOPER **MIDWAY** RELEASE DATE **APRIL 2005**

Aliens and zombies (better yet, throw in Nazi versions of either!) can unanimously be agreed upon as the videogame fodder of choice for the international network of gamers since the dawn of virtual, pixelated time. Combine these tasty targets with a storyline that encompasses conspiracy theory and tight FPS gameplay that portends a solid experience, and what you're looking at is Midway's upcoming re-imagined take on its own classic *Area 51* franchise. But beyond the seemingly gimmicky alien trappings lies an intriguing storyline that aims for something more cinematic than your standard run-n-gun action shooter.

As Lt. Ethan Cole, you send your team of highly trained hazmat specialists into a base to handle a mysterious virus that has spread throughout the mostly underground facility. It's standard procedure for the most part — until you actually enter the base and bear witness to all manner of weird and ghastly goings-on. Your squad will help you out by covering you in certain situations, and their quips and banter serve to immerse you deeply in the adventure at hand.

But at a certain point in the game, you'll have to go it alone. Throughout your journey,

you'll come in to contact with aliens (Grays are a natural fit) and prove right a few conspiracy theories (you knew the lunar landing was a stage-managed hoax, right?), but you'll also become infected with the virus. Lucky for you, it will affect you in a way you can use to your advantage — namely, a projectile attack that launches tentacled organisms who inflict serious bodily harm.

Weaponry, like the tentacle shot, divvies up its load between human and alien technology. One of the more exceedingly cool alien-derived firearms you'll be able to wield, the BBG, projects an infrared line at your target, but will deflect off of inorganic surfaces to target organic ones. In other words, you'll be able to execute seriously wicked hits around corners or down a twisty corridor on unsuspecting chumps. Sneak attacks don't get much better than that.

And to enhance the cinematic feel, Midway has invested in celebrity voice actors to play the major roles. With his deadpan delivery, David Duchovny is a match for Lt. Cole, while goth poster boy Marilyn Manson does his spooky duty as an alien who speaks to Lt. Cole through human hosts.

Add to this the team's emphasis on excellent multiplayer maps (designed by ex-id and Ion



Storm veterans Tom Hall and John Romero) and a sly sense of humor that runs throughout, and *Area 51* has the potential to be more than just a retooling of a past classic. It's releasing into a tough market dominated by Xbox's heaviest FPS hitters, and every facet will need to be polished to perfection for it to make its deserving mark.

Live at a Glance

Feature	Details
Platform	Xbox Live
Genre	First-person shooter
Developer	Midway
Publisher	Midway
Release Date	April 2005
ESRB Rating	TEEN
Key Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-player campaign • Multiplayer modes • Customizable loadouts • Special abilities • Storyline-driven • Cinematic presentation • Voice acting by David Duchovny and Marilyn Manson



■ The environments in *Pariah* are guaranteed to be absolute stunners



As a doctor who crash-lands in a forest near a prison on an unknown planet, you're hosed.

Pariah

Time to get your disease on

PUBLISHER **GROOVE GAMES** | DEVELOPER **DIGITAL EXTREMES**
RELEASE DATE **MARCH 2005**

In a season that's thick with first-person shooter titles, the behind-the-scenes co-developer of the *Unreal* series, Digital Extremes, seeks to claim its own territory in the market with *Pariah*. With an emphasis on storyline and atmosphere, *Pariah* will incorporate the FPS genre's run-n-gun gameplay, a penchant for *Unreal*-style weaponry flair, and some serious

Xbox Live support to keep you playing long into the night. By the way, these are good things.

Aside from the inclusion of user-controlled vehicles (in multiplayer and single-player) and a slew of cool weaponry, *Pariah*'s real crown jewel will most likely be the option for players to craft their own maps. Using the in-game map editor, you'll be able to significantly tweak an existing map or create a completely new one from scratch, then save it to your Xbox's hard drive. From this point on, you decide how to use your map. Will you put it onto a memory unit and bring it to a friend's house for some split-screen shenanigans? Or will you upload it to Xbox Live and test out your creation as a multiplayer arena in Team Deathmatch?

So far, only a handful of upcoming Xbox titles utilize the map-making feature available via Live's latest incarnation. But *Pariah* promises to be a complete package: graphics, storyline, gameplay, and online. With a March release a ways down the road, you'll have plenty of time to hone your skills for creating carnage, as well as the maps said carnage will be inflicted on.



In a Nutshell



The story behind *Pariah* is set in 2520, where interplanetary exploration and exploitation has been readily accomplished. You are Dr. James Mason, just an ordinary professional with a job to do: Escort a sick patient from an off-planet medical facility for treatment. But, you guessed it – things go horribly wrong as your ship crash lands onto the planet and things take a turn for the worst. Plot twists, horrific realizations, and possible contamination – you can bet they'll be par for *Pariah*'s potentially epic course.

Live at a Glance

Live at a Glance	
System Requirements	1.5GB
Gameplay	First Person Shooter
Online Features	Multiplayer
Map Editor	Yes
Team Play	Yes
Gameplay Features	
■ Deathmatch	
■ Team Deathmatch	
■ Capture the Flag	
■ Free-for-all	

Brothers in Arms

A game that will live in infamy...

PUBLISHER **UBISOFT** | DEVELOPER **GEARBOX** | RELEASE DATE **FEBRUARY 2005**

When the game was first announced, *Brothers in Arms* promised to be one of the most realistic WWII shooter experiences to hit the gaming world. Now, we're happy to say that it might go beyond simply being realistic and cross over into superstar status if it achieves its ambitious goals.

Combining the familiar controls of first-person shooters like *Medal of Honor* with the advanced squad tactics of games like *Full Spectrum Warrior*, *Brothers in Arms* drops you straight into the jump boots of squad commander Sgt. Matt Baker, leader 3rd squad, 3rd platoon of the 502nd Parachute Infantry Regiment, charged with taking out the enemy and bringing his boys home alive. The entire game is a faithful recreation of the historically significant events surrounding that regiment's real-life actions in securing the inland areas after D-Day.

Though the multiplayer elements of *Brothers in Arms* have yet to be fully revealed, Ubisoft is expected to make the experience as tight, rewarding, and immersive as the single-player campaign promises to be. We're expecting big things from this one. **XBOX**



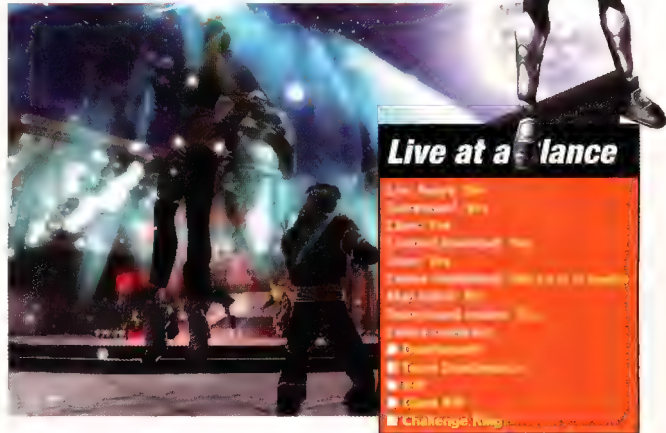
Iron Phoenix

Everybody was kung-fu fighting

PUBLISHER **SAMMY STUDIOS** | DEVELOPER **INTERSERV INTERNATIONAL** | RELEASE DATE **FEBRUARY 2005**

After the release of *Dead or Alive Ultimate* as Xbox Live's first online 3D fighter, Sammy Studios plans to follow up with a fighter of its own that isn't quite like anything you've probably played before on a console. Foregoing the traditional one-on-one or even tag-team fighting experience, *Iron Phoenix* instead opens up the deathmatch arena usually reserved for first-person shooters to a host of weapon-wielding warriors unconcerned with bullets or grenades.

Pick your character from a host of playable choices, but keep in mind that it's your weapon that will determine your fighting style, not your character. Once you equip up to two different weapons that can be swapped with others strewn across the map, each blade, claw, and the like has a set of unique moves, including special Chi attacks and devastating super moves. When you're ready to go, you'll take your customized warrior to the arena where you'll duke it out with up to 15 other players online. Pull off a wide range of attacks, run up walls to reach higher ground, throw objects to damage enemies – everything's an option in *Iron Phoenix*. **XBOX**



■ Weapons in *Snowblind* range from your vanilla-type pistols to some excellent sci-fi-style firearms well-suited for a future soldier.

■ Hey, they're just trying to earn a paycheck, too.

Project Snowblind

For when you're feeling super

PUBLISHER **EIDOS** • DEVELOPER **CRYSTAL DYNAMICS**
RELEASE DATE **FEBRUARY 2005**

What does it take nowadays to make a futuristic first-person shooter stand out from the crowd? A lot. Luckily, Eidos' wildly colorful and action-packed *Project Snowblind* has scientifically modified super soldiers on its side.

It's 2043 and you're just a regular schmoe named Nathan Frost, swallowed up by the countless ranks of the military – until you're taken out by the opposition. Then, just like the Six Million Dollar Man, scientists resurrect you – complete with shiny metallic innards – in order to lead a new fleet of elite super soldiers to victory against the enemy. Now you're cooking with gas – if "gas" means being able to wield weaponry that can manipulate objects and people, that is.

While Eidos has managed to keep the storyline rather secret, so far the star of *Snowblind* remains its weaponry and combat features. Everything from standard FPS armaments like machine guns to customized skills to suit your new titanium-alloy body (like

cloaking and heat vision) are incorporated throughout the game's 10-plus missions, which are spread out over 16 various sprawling maps. And though the maps portray urban wastelands and Eastern temples, they still team with a special kind of vibrancy – full of neon signage, gritty textures, and tough enemies.

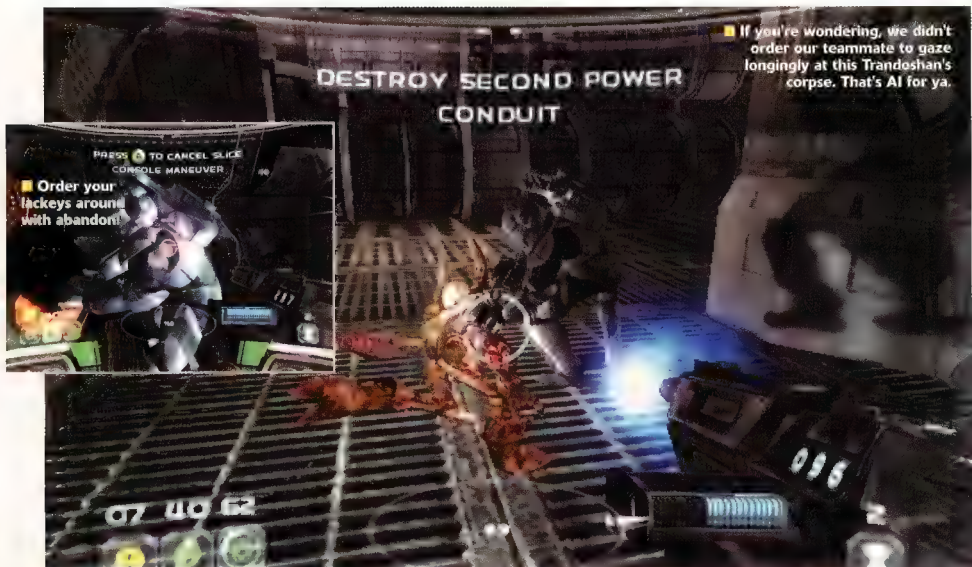
But will those environments hold up in a 16-player arena over Xbox Live? We believe they will, and you'll have your chance to check out a multitude of different team-based or non-team-based modes against friends and with your clans. Everything from the standard deathmatch modes to varying degrees of Assault Mode (tactical or not) will be available as options from the minute you sign on. And the cool thing about Assault Mode is that it's exclusive to Xbox!

With a dedicated team behind *Snowblind*, we're hopeful that it'll add a new dimension to the straightforward genre with its super-powered skills and varying mission objectives. After all,

just imagine how cool cloaking will be in a multiplayer match

Live at a Glance

- Elite Soldiers: Yes
- Sci-fi Weapons: Yes
- Climb: Yes
- Concept: Sci-fi Action
- Voice: Yes
- Online Multiplayer: Yes
- Map Editor: No
- Team-based Modes: Yes
- Game Modes: Yes
- Deathmatch: Yes
- Tactical Assault: Yes
- Assault: Yes
- Team Elimination: Yes
- Capture the Flag: Yes
- Versus: Yes



Star Wars Republic Commando

Building a better clone

PUBLISHER **LUCASARTS** | DEVELOPER **LUCASARTS** | RELEASE DATE **MARCH 2005**

LucasArts never pretended that it wasn't trying to take a winning franchise and couple it with a mish-mash of successful gameplay formulas as the basis of *Star Wars Republic Commando*. After all, the *Halo*-esque first-person-action style, combined with the squad tactics of PC favorites like *Operation Flashpoint*, seems like a can't-fail equation when thrown into a Wookiee-heavy mix. This is no surprise.

The real surprise is how well every element is coming together. Now that we've been able to go hands-on with *Republic Commando*, we can safely say that it's definitely shaping up to be much, much more than a marketing exec's recipe for brand-recognition success. As an Xbox-exclusive title, the game has free reign to take advantage of the system's features and graphics power, which is great news for us.

Though the single-player campaign is driven mainly by the ability to guide your three-man squad through a variable series of missions, the healthy roster of multiplayer modes is what will most likely keep players coming back to their posts long after the end credits have rolled. With

bedrock foundation modes for Xbox Live such as Deathmatch, Team Deathmatch, and Capture the Flag already in the pipeline, you'll also be able to participate in a mode called Assault.

Theoretically a bit like the single-flag CTF matches in *Halo 2* (in which you swap between offense and defense after a round is over), Assault instead is a points-based affair. You'll receive two points for successfully invading your enemy's base with your own flag, while nabbing one point for fending off an invasion of your own base once the roles are swapped. The points are then tallied up to decide the winner.

In addition to the online multiplayer modes, you'll also be able to download new content. Everything from playable characters in multiplayer to new maps will be gradually made available to all the fledgling Republic Commandos eager to test out their skills against friends over Live. And with support for up to 16 players in each Live-enabled multiplayer match, you'll have your work cut out for you.

And just think — all of this multiplayer is simply one part of the overall *Star Wars Republic*

Commando package! Single-player is looking and playing leaps and bounds better than the last time we had a chance to check it out, so we're suitably excited to finally get our mitts on it when it makes it way to Xbox this March.

Live at a Glance



Xbox Live Gamer's Field

The Whiner

(TEARIUS EXCUSUS)

"I would have beat you if you hadn't crouched/camped/picked the good car/gun/map."

PROFILE: A loss is never the Whiner's fault; it's lag, or brain-dead teammates who don't follow orders, or screen glare, or cheat codes, or one of those faulty controllers that only the Whiner ever gets, or an earthquake – anything but a lack of skill on the Whiner's part. Every loss is a reason to complain, and there are ample reasons to complain. Really just about life in general.

STRATEGIES: If you're feeling generous and brave, you can try to defuse the Whiner with some encouraging comments about their positive achievements; sometimes they counteract the insecurity and the Whiner realizes that there's nothing to be upset about. Or you could suggest calling 911 and asking for the "whahhhm-balance." They love that.

The Griefer

(DISRUPTUS OBNOXIOUS)

"I don't care. Shut up. I paid for Live. Shut up. Shut up."

PROFILE: One of the better-known species of online gamers, the Griefer is thankfully not too common on Xbox Live. The Griefer lives to ruin other people's fun, so you can often find them driving in the opposite direction in racing games, running in the opposite direction in football games, and assisting the opposite side in team-based games. If only they would shoot in the opposite direction in first-person games...

STRATEGIES: When you meet a Griefer, do not approach. Just mute 'em, boot 'em, and let Xbox Live admins handle the dispute. Or you can introduce him to The Tough Guy.

The Ghost

(OBLIVIOUS SILENCIO)

("")
..

PROFILE: The Ghost joins your server. The Ghost joins your team. The Ghost never utters a word, does not respond to any known form of communication, does not join in on team strategy, and leaves silently. It's like the Ghost was never there.

STRATEGIES: If the Ghost is any good, don't worry about it. It might be one of the game's developers "slumming" with the fans.

The Tough Guy

(FURIOUS PUGILUS)

"Dude, I'm gonna @#\$%in' kick your ass."

PROFILE: For the Tough Guy, proximity (or lack of it) breeds bravery. You sniped him with a headshot in *Halo 2*, so you will have your face rearranged, as soon as you tell him where you live. Once riled, the Tough Guy rarely calms down, and you won't know you've encountered one until it's too late. Can be easily spotted by the bulging vein in his neck.

STRATEGIES: Find what really bothers him and then light that short fuse, over and over and over...



Guide

THE GOOD NEWS: There are now more than one million gamers playing on Xbox Live. **The bad news:** You can break them down into a handful of sad but true stereotypes. Learn to spot them and you too can survive in the wild!

The Motormouth

(GABBIUS MAXIMUS)

"So any way the guy tells me that he's going to @#\$% in 'k' my ass and I am like dude why are you so angry it's just a game!"

PROFILE: Quite the opposite of the Ghost, the Motormouth is on Xbox Live for the social experience – at the expense of paying attention to the game at hand. Often suspected to be able to unhinge their jaw, the Motormouth talks about anything and everything once they get a captive audience – what they had for lunch, how cool their last game was (the one you weren't there for), every score of every review in the last issue of *OXM*, or every last gory detail of some private (often romantic) story with the one other person they know in real life on the 10-player server. Sadly, the Motormouth often brings skills; its teammates simply have to bring earplugs.

STRATEGIES: This is the reason the Mute function was invented. Carefully praise their skills for fear of engaging in conversation.



The Normal One

(HOMO SAPIENS)

"Good game."

PROFILE: This is you, of course, because you've never been any of the others!

The Insider

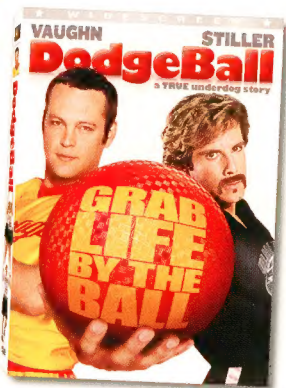
(EGOTISTICUS DELUSIO)

"This is nice and all, but Halo 3 is way better. Yeah, I played it."

PROFILE: A fountain of useless and dubious knowledge, the Insider has played every game ever released for the Xbox and a handful of betas as well. They have played games that do not yet exist, they have intimate knowledge of Microsoft's true motivations and future plans, and they have J Allard's phone number. Basically, they have everything but proof of their claims. Insiders often work at software stores and/or run small websites in their quest to be an Insider. Insiders never work for Microsoft.

STRATEGIES: Be unimpressed. This should come naturally.

**GRAB
YOUR
OWN.**



"Very funny, very hip!"

— New York Daily News

Catch It On DVD December 7!

Twentieth Century Fox presents a Red Hour production "DodgeBall: A True Underdog Story" Vince Vaughn Ben Stiller Christine Taylor and Rip Torn
by Theodore Shapiro and George Galanopoulos and Alan Baumbach and Alan Baumbach and Alan Baumbach and Alan Baumbach and Alan Baumbach
by Ben Stiller Stuart Cornfeld and Ben Stiller Stuart Cornfeld and Ben Stiller Stuart Cornfeld and Ben Stiller Stuart Cornfeld and Ben Stiller Stuart Cornfeld

PG-13
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

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PG-13
Some Material May Be Inappropriate for Children Under 13

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